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ABSTRACT

As reflective teaching has been a major concern in education with the movement for increased teacher professionalism and involvement in all aspects of school decision-making, the 10 articles in this volume address reflective practice in the social studies with an emphasis on how reflection and inquiry can contribute to both teacher and curriculum development. The six articles in the first section present reflective practice as a way to link curriculum development with the professional development of teachers. The four articles in the second section describes specific models of practice for teacher education, teacher research, and collaboration among school and university personnel. The articles include: (1) "Perspectives on Reflective Practice in Social Studies Education" (Stephen J. Thornton); (2) "The Social Studies Teacher as Curriculum Creator: Reflections on Teaching Middle School Social Studies" (Jessie B. Crook); (3) "Critical Reflections on Classroom Practice: Teaching as an Investigative Activity" (Sandra Mathison); (4) "Reflective Practice and Professional Growth: Using Action Research in the Elementary Classroom" (Cindy B. Berkowitz); (5) "Teachers as Curriculum Theorizers" (E. Wayne Ross); (6) "Teachers Leading Change: The Bethlehem Lab School Project" (James Nehring); (7) "Reflective Practice and Teacher Education" (Susan Adler); (8) "Why Teacher Research?" (Joel T. Jenne); (9) "Reflective Practice and the Culture of Schools" (David Hursh); and (10) "Creating Partnerships and Building a Reflective Community: The Role of Personal Theorizing and Action Research" (Jeffrey W. Cornett and others). (CK)

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BULLETIN NO. 88

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IN SOCIAL STUDIES

EDITED BY E. WAYNE ROSS

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Reflective Practice in Social Studies

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Edited by
E. Wayne Ross

National Council for the Social Studies
Bulletin Number 88

Dedicated to truly reflective practitioners:

Richard C. Phillips
M. Eugene Gilliom
Robert E. Jewett

National Council for the Social Studies
Founded 1921

Editorial staff on this publication: Lynn Page Whittaker, Salvatore J. Natoli, Pamela D. Hollar
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Introduction

Reflection and inquiry are activities that have been associated with social studies since its introduction as a school subject. This is not surprising, of course, considering the influence of John Dewey and other like-minded individuals on the formation of social studies. The history of social studies education has been influenced by numerous people working in the Deweyan tradition of education, which emphasizes experience and reflection. A sample of these Deweyan social educators, many of whom have or had connections to Ohio State University, include Alan Griffin, Lawrence Metcalf, Maurice Hunt, Robert Jewett, Richard C. Phillips, and M. Eugene Gilliom.

In recent years, however, reflective teaching has been a major concern in education as movements for increased teacher professionalism and increased involvement of teachers in all aspects of school decision-making have swept North America and other parts of the world. The catalyst for this renewed interest in reflective practice was Donald Schön's book, *The Reflective Practitioner.* Since the early 1980s, an enormous amount of literature has appeared on reflective practice that represents the nature of diverse perspectives on reflection and how educators can encourage it. This volume addresses reflective practice in social studies, with an emphasis on how reflection and inquiry can contribute to both teacher and curriculum development.

The chapters in this volume are divided into two sections. The first, "Reflective Practice in Social Studies: Linking Curriculum Improvement and Professional Development," presents reflective practice as a way to link curriculum development with professional development of teachers. Chapters by Berkowitz, Crook, and Nehring describe efforts of practitioners at the elementary, middle, and high school levels that show how improvement of curriculum and teaching are inextricably linked. Chapters by Thornton, Mathison, and Ross describe this vision of reflective practice in relation to wider curriculum development and reform efforts and offer some reconceptualizations of curriculum and teaching that will allow for truly reflective practice. The second section, "Promoting Reflective Practice Among Beginning and Experienced Teachers," describes specific models of practice for teacher education (Adler), teacher research (Jenne), and collaboration among school and university personnel (Hursh; Cornett, Elliott, Chant, and Stern). It is our hope that these contributions will encourage a reconsideration of the roles of teachers in creating meaningful experiences for students in social studies classrooms and will advance the dialogue on reflective practice in social studies.

Part I

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Reflective Practice in Social Studies: Linking Curriculum Improvement and Professional Development

Chapter One

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Perspectives on Reflective Practice in Social Studies Education

Stephen J. Thornton
Teachers College, Columbia University

As John Dewey (1933, 9) memorably underscored, educative experience entails reflective thought, which he defined as: "Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends." Reflection takes on special importance in social studies teaching because, without it, the subject can so easily degenerate into little more than memorization of information that students perceive as irrelevant to their lives.

Although university-based educators have long echoed Dewey in calling for reflective practice in social studies education (e.g., Metcalf 1963), little headway has been made toward its realization in the schools (Hertzberg 1981). Immersed in the daily grind of classrooms with scant access to support and resources, teachers are generally in a poor position to teach reflectively and, instead, frequently teach reactively (Jackson 1968; Noddings and Enright 1983). Moreover, local and state policies have often resulted in "undermining" rather than "improving" teaching (Zumwalt 1988). Reflective teaching remains the exception rather than the rule in social studies teaching.

This chapter is based on two interrelated arguments. First, I shall argue that only the simplest and crudest models of educational practice, such as Madeline Hunter's (1984) "seven elements" of "effective" lessons, can be dictated to teachers. Even then, it is debatable at best whether such models result in instructional improvement (Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993). Ideals such as reflective teaching or open education or critical thinking are necessarily open to various interpretations by practitioners and cannot be simply installed in schools. For example, attempts to package critical thinking into instructional checklists of discrete subskills only trivialize what it means to think critically (see Cornbleth 1985). Therefore, if we are serious about cultivating reflective social studies teaching, we will need policies and procedures supportive of teachers doing the important work of educational improvement.

My second argument is that teachers are, whether we recognize it or not, curricular-instructional gatekeepers. Once the classroom door is closed, teachers normally have considerable autonomy to shape day-to-day curriculum and instruction. As gatekeepers, teachers make the primary decisions "concerning both the subject matter and the experiences to which students have access and the nature of that subject matter and those experiences" (Thornton 1991, 237). How teachers tend the curricular-instructional gate may be reflective or unreflective, or even based on unexamined assumptions and conventions. Still, tending the gate comes with the territory: what teachers believe and their resultant decisions concerning planning, instructional strategy, assessment of student learning, and so forth are the "key" determinants of what students take away from the classroom (Shaver, Davis, and Helburn 1980).

The following hypothetical story illustrates some of the many dimensions of gatekeeping:

> Sitting at her desk, Ms. Diaz recalls recently attending a workshop on incorporating multicultural perspectives in American history courses. She has long felt that the perspectives of people of color and foreign cultures were given too little attention in standard survey courses in American history. As

a member of a minority group, she also feels a personal stake in broadening the perspectives of her eighth graders, who are mostly European-Americans.

She decides to try out some of her new ideas in the forthcoming unit on World War II, where she sees possibilities for adding a cultural dimension to the usual diplomatic-military approach to the U.S.-Japan conflict. She also sees opportunities to draw parallels with cultural misunderstandings between the two nations today.

Looking down at her desk, Ms. Diaz notices a reminder from her department chair concerning state-mandated achievement tests, which will be administered in three weeks. She remembers that the social studies test has usually dwelled on the military aspects of World War II.

To save both preparation time and class time, Ms. Diaz decides that she will quickly cover the military aspects of the war that her students will need for the test by using some old worksheets she has in her files. She will introduce the unit with a motivating activity on stereotypes Americans hold today, and the ideas generated will then be applied to U.S.-Japanese relations at the time of Pearl Harbor.

Unexpectedly, when the unit begins, the students perform poorly on the worksheet questions. Ms. Diaz alters her plans in order to spend more time on the military aspects of the war.

This is an obviously oversimplified account of gatekeeping. Nonetheless, it provides some indication of both its complexity and fluidity. Gatekeeping entails juggling multiple, competing, even conflicting, goals. For example, Ms. Diaz's decision to incorporate an explicit multicultural perspective in the unit had to be reconciled with other factors such as preparing her students for the test. But this was only the beginning. She also considered, among other things, how to motivate her students, how to relate history to current events, and what materials she already had in hand. She also was engaged in what Dewey called "flexible purposing," the reordering of priorities in view of shifting student needs and interests. Of course, this hypothetical account of Ms. Diaz's gatekeeping greatly understates the complexities real teachers confront in real classrooms. No mention has been made, for instance, of the fact that Ms. Diaz must also monitor student behavior, orchestrate smooth transitions from one learning activity to the next, and ensure that all students have materials.

My two arguments taken together—that we cannot mandate ideal models of educational practice and that teachers are gatekeepers—have major ramifications for moving toward reflective practice in social studies. At minimum, my arguments suggest that the ideal of reflective practice will be difficult to realize and that teachers themselves must be at the heart of its realization. In the remainder of this chapter, I shall outline three factors that seem to be crucial in efforts to foster reflective practice: 1) rationale-building, 2) a look at teacher improvement efforts more generally, and 3) the centrality of context in reflective teaching.

Rationale-Building

The tendency to let unexamined beliefs shape social studies teaching has long been a major cause of instruction failing to have the desired effects on students (Shaver 1977; Thornton 1991). A surprisingly large number of social studies teachers, for example, persist in the belief that students must absorb a hefty dose of information with which to think before they are capable of thinking critically. Although psychologists have long exposed this belief as faulty, it continues to undergird much teacher gatekeeping (McKee 1988; Thornton 1992).

Rationale-building involves "a process of making clear and examining the beliefs in one's frame of reference—beliefs about what the world has been, is, will be, and should be like—that influence consciously or not, [one's] behavior as a

teacher" (Shaver 1977, 97). When teachers construct rationales, they are moving from nonspecified, nonexplicated frames of reference toward careful consideration of their beliefs and the implications for curriculum and instruction. In building a rationale for what she does, Ms. Diaz, for example, might consider whether her old worksheet is necessarily the best way to cover military developments, which implicit messages about social studies knowledge are conveyed in a worksheet approach, and what alternatives exist for coverage itself. Thus, gatekeeping extends beyond rational criteria for decisionmaking into the teacher's personal and educational values. How might rationale-building be fostered in today's schools?

Any broad-based effort to foster rationale-building must first confront the stark fact that teachers already have many, frequently too many, demands on their time, energy, and imagination. As Theodore Sizer (1984) points out, this demand overload underlies the professional frustrations of many dedicated teachers and the uninspiring character of much instruction. Widespread practice of rationale-building will, therefore, require reordering school priorities and more control by teachers themselves of their work. Minor tinkering with how schools and teachers currently operate will be insufficient.

We can secure some perspective on the possibilities of rationale-building from current restructuring efforts underway in selected schools across the nation. Many of these schools have had considerable success in rationale-building (though not necessarily calling it by that name). We have learned from these efforts that support for teacher reflection recasts teachers' roles as well as alters entrenched top-down school power structures. The isolation in which most teachers have traditionally done their work has also given way to collaborative notions of educational practice in realms such as curriculum planning, assessment procedure design, and program evaluation (e.g., Lieberman, Darling-Hammond, and Zuckerman 1991; Meier 1992).

Of course, not all schools are restructuring, and in traditionally structured schools, the incentives and means for fostering reflective teaching are likely to be less available than in innovative schools, especially given that institutional practices in schools seldom change (Popkewitz, Tabachnick, and Wehlage 1982). More particularly, social studies teachers tend to draw a sharp line between what they believe works and the ideas of college social studies professors—which they believe seldom address the realities of classroom teaching (Leming 1989; McCutcheon 1981). Although reflection will not necessarily conflict with what works, many teachers may nonetheless perceive a conflict.

In these less-than-ideal circumstances, rationale-building is most likely to find widespread acceptance among social studies teachers only when they believe it workable. Although this requirement means that rationale-building may not be adopted quickly by most teachers, policymakers should refrain from the quick-fix of coercing teachers to build rationales. Such top-down policies have contributed in the past to the failure of promising ideas such as inquiry to gain widespread acceptance among teachers. It would be far preferable to begin with teachers who wish to be involved and let other teachers judge from their examples. Even more important, however, we *cannot coerce* teachers into building rationales and then expect them to have a strong personal stake in the process or outcomes. The experience in the past of trying to coerce teachers into becoming open educators illustrates that a model that teachers do not believe in often leaves educational practice worse off than if things had been left alone (Noddings and Enright 1983).

As presently structured, most schools provide few incentives for teacher collaboration on projects such as rationale-building. Indeed, the demands on teachers' time during the crowded school day tacitly encourages teachers to isolate themselves from their colleagues (Flinders 1988). Changing this state of affairs will require more collabora-

tion among teachers. Teachers will require incentives, as well as the necessary time and resources to make rationale-building possible. In an important sense, rationale-building involves building community among teachers—with different teachers contributing their special interests and skills and experienced teachers sharing with younger teachers—with the goal that all teachers could have access to a rich pool of ideas and instructional materials as well as substantive collegial support (see Fanselow 1988 and Nehring's chapter in this volume).

Efforts aimed at rationale-building could also provide a basis for identifying staff development needs. It would be a sensible alternative to the one-shot, in-service approach to staff development, which most often features an emphasis on remediation rather than teacher growth (Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993). Not only do one-shot approaches have a poor track record in terms of teacher improvement, they are seldom well articulated to fit the needs of a particular setting and a particular curriculum. Through the process of rationale-building, however, teachers would have a basis for participation with administrators and policymakers in setting priorities. For example, in a district's response to a reduction in instructional budgets, teachers should participate in deciding how to cut with least harm to instructional quality.

Teacher Improvement Efforts

The logic of what I have said about rationale-building leads naturally to a broad reappraisal of traditional approaches to improving teaching. Traditionally, education policymakers have relied on top-down approaches to staff development, curriculum change, program evaluation, and teacher supervision as means of altering classroom practices. In the past, policymakers often did not seek or value practitioners' perspectives in formulating teacher policies (Flinders 1989). As a result, policymakers who are remote from the daily grind of classrooms defined both the aims and the means of teachers' main opportunities for professional growth (Smyth 1992). For several reasons, this disjuncture between those who make policies and those who must make some sense of them in day-to-day practice has hindered the development of effective policies and classroom practices.

First, policymakers have tended to assume that consonance between their intentions and what teachers do in the classroom is an unmitigated good (see Thornton 1988). School districts routinely strive to implement curricula in a manner consonant with developers' intentions and in a uniform manner across the district. Teachers, however, may have sound reasons to modify or diverge from certain policies. Whereas policymakers work with a broad target population in mind, teachers do not work with students in general. Rather, they deal with a particular group of students with particular needs—needs that may or may not be shared by all of the broad target population. Teachers are, in fact, exercising laudable professionalism when they modify policies to fit the needs of their students (see Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993).

Traditional top-down approaches have often been characterized by a second shortcoming: policies based on the assumption that new task demands can be mandated and added on to what teachers already do. This assumes that teachers have energy and time to spare. Just the opposite seems, however, to be characteristic of reflective teachers (Zumwalt 1988). That is, far from imposing more restrictions on teachers' autonomy, reflective practitioners need relief from countless bureaucratic chores and pro forma but cumbersome accountability mechanisms to focus their energy on curricular-instructional improvement. In this regard, the implementation of currently popular models such as Hunter's (1984) for effective lessons or Lawrence Lezotte's (1989) prescriptions for "effective" schools may run directly counter to teacher reflection. As Flinders (1989, 74) writes: "any change that increases the task demands on teachers without offering compen-

sating resources will threaten the quality of their teaching. . . . [I]nstructional improvement depends largely on providing the right resources, at the right time, to the right people."

Third, top-down reforms often simply fail to have their desired effects on teaching. This is frequently attributed to the loosely coupled nature of the American school system with its approximately 15,000 school districts. But it also occurs in tightly coupled systems. For example, the Conservative government recently mandated a national curriculum for England. The history curriculum prescribes a set of domain-specific objectives. In a study of 28 "skilled," "junior" (i.e., 7–11 year olds) teachers, however, Peter Knight (1991) found that the teachers paid little heed to the mandated objectives and retained their emphasis on coverage or "exposure."

The Centrality of Context

Merely giving teachers more autonomy in decision-making is unlikely to lead to reflection, unless autonomy is accompanied by the "development of professionally relevant knowledge" (Lichtenstein, McLaughlin, and Knudsen 1992). There is by no means, however, a consensus on what this knowledge is (Noddings 1990). In my view, one of the most promising ways to develop reflection is to use case studies (written and video forms) of reflective practice in real settings by pre- and in-service teachers. For example, "Mr. Bauer," a tenth-grade United States history teacher I studied, used simulations, role plays, studies of the local community, and independent research projects in addition to lectures. He also had arranged his imaginative curriculum so that assessment procedures were varied as well as contributing to students' understanding of the subject matter (Thornton 1988 and 1993). Similarly, Linda Levstik (1993) has described how "Ruby," a first-grade teacher, constructed rich discussions of historical figures and historical books that led to her students "building a sense of history." Such cases, as Lee Shulman (1983, 495) wrote, "instantiate the possible, not only documenting that it can be done but also laying out at least one detailed example of how it was organized, developed, and pursued."

Significantly, case studies also move us away from the "what works " approach to teaching endorsed during the Reagan administration (United States Department of Education 1987). Although they may be research-based, practices that "work" are grounded in a normative conception of what counts as educationally desirable. Moreover, teachers must always adapt practices that "work" in general to a particular setting. For these reasons, the authority and utility of "what works" are largely illusory and distract attention from the much more difficult and rewarding task of developing reflective practitioners. As Frederick Erickson (1992, 10) observes, it is always the reader of case studies who must determine what generalizes from one setting to the next: "How does the situation the author describes resemble what goes on around here? What is similar and what is different in my situation?" By raising these questions, case studies encourage reflection rather than compliance.

Moving away from a monolithic conception of "what works" reiterates my point above that reflective practice is likely to take many forms that cannot be entirely pre-specified. This necessary variety makes holding teachers accountable for adhering to one model of practice unwarranted. Two of my own experiences with social studies research—as a reviewer of a research chapter on teacher "competence" (Stanley 1991) and as a contributor to a volume on "exemplary" teaching (Brophy, 1993)—revealed that even academic leaders in the field often work with vastly different conceptions of reflective teaching in mind (see Adler's chapter in this volume). Since it turns out that even the university-based leaders in social studies education cannot agree on what good teaching is in the subject, how can we justify continuing to hold teachers accountable for using the *one* best way to teach (see Darling-Hammond and

Goodwin, 1993)? It is time for policymakers to recognize that no unitary conception of reflective teaching exists and that it will necessarily vary according to the characteristics of individual teachers and the settings in which those individuals teach.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that we cannot mandate ideal models of teaching, nor can we circumvent teacher gatekeeping. These arguments are hardly new. They are, however, still frequently overlooked in efforts to improve teacher knowledge and skills. What Sara Lawrence Lightfoot (1983) concluded in studying "good" schools is equally applicable to the quest for teacher improvement: teachers' work needs to be construed as ever-changing and incomplete, imperfect but striving toward better practice, and always significantly shaped by a unique context against which it should be appraised rather than by comparison with other teachers in different contexts. In this sense, reflective teaching is best understood as an ideal aim, which can never be perfectly realized. The aim here is more a process of teacher growth than a set of outcomes that we can specify in advance. Only if we recognize that reflection is a custom-made job and not mass-produced is it likely to secure a foothold in many classrooms.

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Chapter Two

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The Social Studies Teacher as Curriculum Creator: Reflections on Teaching Middle School Social Studies

Jessie B. Crook
Mifflin International Middle School

Until recently I had not realized that my approach to teaching, developed over seventeen years in the classroom, was "reflection" and "reflective teaching." John Dewey (1964, 321) termed it being a "student of teaching." I thought what I was doing was being a "lifelong learner." All of these terms are appropriate since teachers involved in a lifetime of learning are constantly reflecting on what to teach and how to teach best to meet the needs of their students.

During my time in the classroom, I developed the belief that the best type of school would be one with social studies as the hub of the curriculum. I expressed this belief to colleagues in presentations at various local, state, and national education conferences and often elicited many chuckles of agreement. I also found that teachers from other subject areas believe the same about their specialties. My reply has always been, "But social studies educators are right!"

I developed my ideas through years of teaching social studies in a self-contained elementary classroom and as part of a two- or three-subject block in middle school classrooms. Social studies is a natural vehicle for developing students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in math, reading, language arts, science, health, and unified arts (art, music, physical education, home economics, industrial arts). Including studies about changes in the way people have lived (history) and where and why people have lived where they do (geography) have proven valuable for me for effective teaching in all subjects.

In the spring of 1987, it was announced that a series of alternative magnet schools would be developed in the Columbus, Ohio, Public Schools district. Each school would have a special theme focusing on a specific area of curriculum. I was pleased to learn that Mifflin Middle School would become an international studies and foreign languages middle school. At last it seemed my ideal school would become a reality. My enthusiasm for this new school was even greater when I was hired as the curriculum coordinator. This gave me the opportunity to begin work toward my goal of building a school curriculum with social studies, more specifically global education, as the hub.

I soon found that coordinating the creation of a magnet school curriculum involved much more than writing a new curriculum, putting it in place, then evaluating its success—it meant creating spaces for dialogue and reflection on curriculum and instructional issues. The responsibilities of the resource teacher/curriculum coordinator in the job announcement included:

- Coordinate outside resources to enhance program.
- Willingness to work extended hours during the summer.
- Participate in initial and continued development, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum.
- Coordinate grade level and school-wide projects and programs that combine foreign language, international studies, and cultural enrichment.
- Work with teachers in a team relationship.
- Plan, organize, and lead in-service and instructional programs.
- Assist teachers in providing enriching

experiences in international studies and foreign language to students having a wide range of achievement levels.

These responsibilities are only part of the curriculum coordinator job. A significant part of the job involves educating parents and the community about our international and foreign languages program. I spend time talking to and escorting interested parents and local community persons through our building in an effort to build awareness and understanding of the importance of the school's mission. As an alternative school, 25 to 50 percent of our students are admitted under the lottery process; the balance are neighborhood students. Each year we have a waiting list of students whose families want an international studies and foreign language program for their children.

In addition to parents and interested community persons, many educators from other districts around the state and nation regularly visit Mifflin International. A part of my job as curriculum coordinator has been to arrange visits to Mifflin for administrators and teachers from districts planning to develop similar programs in their schools. Visitors to Mifflin often comment on the appearance of the building, the polite greetings they receive from students and staff (in six different languages), and the general feeling of welcome. As one visiting teacher said recently, "It's evident that learning is going on in a unique way." Students and visitors learn from the many visuals around the building such as: the student murals in the lunchroom depicting food and words of greeting from each of the school's six language offerings; the mural of global architecture near the main lobby; the rotating thematic art exhibits in the library hallway; the new rainforest scene painted in the sixth grade stairway; the international flags exhibit being collected in the library; and the many large framed photos of real people worldwide doing their jobs and living their lives. As visitors walk by classrooms or step in for a visit and see the various teaching strategies and classroom interactions, it is evident that learning is occurring in unique ways.

Those unique ways of teaching and learning and the general atmosphere of the building have developed over the past six years. Our success is directly related to the cooperative effort and dialogue among students, parents, and staff; this cooperation has allowed us to identify and respond to needs of the students and the community. The magnet school program at Mifflin International began with a new administration and hiring new teachers. However, the international program was placed into an existing regular school. Some eighth graders who had been students at Mifflin before it became a magnet school were initially unhappy with the change in curriculum, staff, and school policies. Their allegiance to the old Mifflin Middle School was not easily transferred to Mifflin International Middle School. During the first days of the 1987-88 school year, a few students were seen wearing "Mifflin International Jail" signs pinned to their T-shirts. Some parents were also unhappy when they learned that their child would be required to study a foreign language under the new international curriculum. Since the make-up of the local neighborhood community was mostly African-American, many parents questioned why there was no African language choice in the curriculum. Students, parents, staff, and especially the district's foreign language and social studies supervisors worked, however, to change the curriculum. The language offerings were expanded to include not only Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish, but also an African Cultures Class including Hausa and Swahili language instruction. This special interest class was offered after school one day a week. A Kiswahili teacher was hired from Ohio State University, and Kiswahili was added as a part-time language the second year of our program and as a full-time language the third year. Foreign language instruction in American middle schools is just beginning to be viewed as a necessary part of schooling; it has been difficult to find middle school certified

teachers in critical languages. We listened to parents, students, and staff through a curriculum development process that valued different voices. We now have much support for the international studies and foreign languages emphasis.

A thoughtful, reflective curriculum development process has been the hallmark of Mifflin International. Three factors have been responsible for the success of the school. The first is the nature of the international studies and foreign language curriculum. The second has been the design of Mifflin International under the seven correlates of the effective schools process. The third has been and continues to be the outstanding Mifflin International staff. Each of these factors contains important components of reflection.

A Thematic Curriculum

The nature of the Mifflin curriculum, with its emphasis on international studies and foreign language education (Table 1) can be of great interest to middle school students. Generally 11- to 14-year-olds are most interested in their friends and whatever their friends find interesting. However, students of this age are also just beginning to look beyond themselves and their families, and teachers can guide them to consider seriously local, national, and global events and issues. Those

Table 1
Goal Statements for Mifflin International Middle School

Mission Statement

We acknowledge that the countries of the world are becoming increasingly interdependent. To prepare for this interdependence we seek to develop thoughtful, creative, caring adults able to function effectively as individuals and citizens. Our students need to develop awareness and understanding of various global issues, cultures and languages. We at Mifflin International Middle School seek to provide students with the background for developing international perspectives as their passports to the future.

Curriculum Themes

Students study a **second language** to communicate, to learn about other people and how they live in an interdependent world, to broaden their intellectual horizons, and to improve their self-image. Languages studied include: Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Spanish, and Swahili.

During the study of **interdependence,** students:
- survey and analyze their community for examples of transnational exchange and foreign influence;
- draw conclusions about the relationship among their lives and the world, their community, and various global systems;
- consider the implications and effects of living in an interdependent world;
- recognize the extent to which news events, usually considered local or national in scope, have regional and global implications.

During the study of **choices,** students:
- develop an awareness of the availability and utilization of natural and human resources;
- recognize the importance of personal choices and their consequences;
- become aware of leadership behaviors and how they influence a group;
- develop awareness of the influence of different types of governments on the lifestyles, careers, and occupational options available to citizens.

During the study of **culture,** students:
- develop a basic understanding of the concept of culture and become able to identify characteristics of their own culture;
- increase respect for their personal culture as well as for people from different cultural backgrounds;
- develop inquiry skills that will assist them in learning about their own culture and other cultures.

During the study of **change,** students:
- recognize the ways in which change influences peoples' lives and how people have responded to change;
- understand change as an ongoing process involving problem solving and planning for the future;
- gain a sense of how history has shaped their personal lives, community, and world;
- strive to bring about positive change in their lives, community, and world.

eighth graders who struggled against the new Mifflin International were won over first, I believe, by the excitement of learning a new language. In addition, the new directions in learning made possible by the school's global themes were of interest to them.

Our eighth-grade students who volunteer at local community kitchens serving the homeless are able to better understand national and global issues such as hunger. The seventh-grade students who meet a Honduran school guest who was the recipient of CROP Walk funds (which help fight hunger) and then participate in a local CROP Walk are actively exhibiting global citizenship. Sixth graders who consider the increasingly interdependent nature of the world by mapping international origins and links are developing global perspectives (Table 2). Students who develop solutions to various global issues also develop thinking and decisionmaking skills. International studies provides a wealth of current events and ever-changing topics of study. With the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of students in most public urban schools today, an activity in international studies/global education is of interest to every learner. When teachers plan the student's day to involve aspects of a given global topic in all subjects, including a foreign language class, then the student has had a day of knowledge, skills, and attitude achievement.

Themes and issues in international and foreign language education lend themselves to every level of schooling, but particularly middle school. Mifflin students choose one of six foreign lan-

Table 2
Studying Interdependence Across the Curriculum

Subject	Classroom Work
Reading/Language Arts	Writing about myself/reading autobiographies of people from many nations
Social Studies	Surveying links to other nations; mapping of international links
Foreign Language	Exploring the origins of language
Mathematics	Surveying international origins of money, time, number systems, and measurement
Science/Health	Studying oceanography using an international theme of oceans and seas
Art	Making self and family portraits; universal symbols
Computer Awareness	Studying the global origins of computer components
Home Economics	Studying international food, clothing and homes
Physical Education	Learning the history, origin, and rules of international sports
Vocal Music	Studying the international origins of favorite music
Instrumental Music	Exploring the origins of instruments
Special Education	Learning more about clothing, housing, foods and transportation in the family, classroom, school and beyond

guages to study in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. By choosing to study Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Spanish, or Swahili, students are stepping into an opportunity to develop global perspectives as well as communication skills. In the language classes, students study not only the language but also the cultures of the places in the world where that language is prevalent. Charlotte Anderson (1982) stresses the importance of foreign language teachers adding a global dimension to their teaching, something our Mifflin foreign language teachers continually strive to develop. Middle school students learning a second language for the first time quickly develop a knowledge base and an appreciation of the cultures of that language. Teachers who are interested and knowledgeable about international events, global issues, and the development of second language skills ignite that same excitement in middle school learners.

The Mifflin International curriculum has developed as an infusion of global education themes into the existing district-wide Course of Study. The research and writings of Willard Kniep (1987), Robert Hanvey (1979), and Lee Anderson (1979) were guides for developing the school's thematic approach. Mifflin teachers of all subjects (math, reading, language arts, science, social studies, health, art, vocal and instrumental music, physical education, home economics, and computers) constantly reconsider ways to meet the district-wide Course of Study pupil performance objectives through global education content. A comparison of Tables 1 and 3 demonstrates the evolution of the curriculum from six two-to six-week themes to four nine-week themes. Through much reflection during the 1987-1988 school year, teachers decided that they could develop four themes more fully than the original six. By combining studies such as the two-week unit "International Links" and the six-week unit "International Interdependence" into one nine-week grading period study of "Interdependence," teachers could allot time for a more complete development of each of the four themes. In whole staff and instructional team meetings, teachers are regularly developing, through a webbing process, ideas for infusing theme concepts into instruction.

As the foreign language program has developed within the school, a reflective approach to cur-

Table 3
Initial School-Wide Curriculum Themes at Mifflin International

Theme	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Diversity	How cultures are similar and different	Ohio's first inhabitants	Our culture draws from many
People & Government	Why people form governments	How governments are formed	We organize our government
Change	Cultures old and new	Ohio grows	Our nation grows
Choices	Using resources	Using resources	We use our resources
Conflict & Cooperation	Learning to live together	Human rights	War & peace
International Interdependence	People depend upon each other	Ohio's connections to the world	Our role in the world

riculum development has proved to be beneficial. In 1987, when the Mifflin International program began, the school district also initiated two foreign language alternative magnet elementary schools. Kenwood French Immersion and Gladstone Spanish Immersion Schools instruct kindergarten through fifth graders with 50 percent of their instruction in French or Spanish. Those fifth graders come to Mifflin for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Over a four-year period, Mifflin has phased in immersion classes for Kenwood and Gladstone students as they progress from sixth to seventh to eighth grades. Three of their six academic subjects are taught in the target language. Each year the elementary immersion students come to sixth grade with stronger language skills. This year's sixth graders from Kenwood and Gladstone began language immersion in the first grade. Mifflin's French and Spanish immersion teachers report that those students are nearly bilingual.

Through many discussions and meetings related to resources, foreign language immersion staffing, and curriculum scope and sequence, the French and Spanish immersion programs have continued to develop from elementary through middle school. The reflective work on the part of the elementary and middle school staffs, parents, and administrators and their willingness to continually consider existing conditions and what has to be done to achieve our goals has led to the successful development of the foreign language immersion program.

Table 4
Correlates of Effective Schools

1. Strong Instructional Leadership at the Building Level
The principal acts as an instructional leader and effectively communicates that instructional mission to staff, parents and students. The principal will develop skills to broaden the leadership as a dispersed concept that will include all teachers.

2. A Clear and Focused Academic Mission
Pupil acquisition of basic school skills takes precedence over all other school activities. School energy and resources are diverted from other activities to achieve that end.

3. High Expectations for All Students and for All Staff
There is a climate of expectation in which the staff believe and demonstrate that all students can attain mastery of the essential school skills. The staff believe that they have the capability to help all students achieve that mastery.

4. Sufficient Opportunity for Learning
The more time spent in instruction, the greater the learning that takes place. The biggest percentage of teaching time will be spent attending to the important and urgent matters.

5. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress
Teachers and principals will be constantly aware of student progress. This will be achieved through a variety of assessment procedures.

6. Extensive Parental Involvement
The relationship between parents and schools will become one of authentic partnership.

7. A Clean, Orderly and Safe Building
There is an atmosphere that is conducive to the instructional mission. In addition to the absence of undesirable student behaviors there is the presence of certain desirable behaviors.

A Vision of an Effective School

The second factor that has contributed to the success of Mifflin International is the adoption of an effective schools model (Edmonds 1982). The seven correlates of effective schools, as implemented district-wide by Columbus Public Schools, are shown in Table 4. Evidence of Mifflin's emphasis on the effective schools process is found throughout this chapter. For example, the school's original mission statement was written by a steering committee of teachers in the summer of 1987 during the earliest planning phases of the school:

> As we approach the twentieth century, the countries of the world are becoming increasingly interdependent. To prepare for this interdependence, we seek to develop thoughtful, creative, caring adults able to function effectively as individuals and citizens. Our students, as citizens of tomorrow, need to develop an awareness, understanding, and acceptance of various people, languages and cultures. We at Mifflin International Middle School seek to provide students with a background for developing an international perspective as a passport to the future.

Table 1 contains the revised mission statement, written during a weekend staff planning retreat in 1990. At that retreat the staff considered the mission statement in relation to current global education ideas and resources. Minor revisions were made to reflect the emphasis our curriculum places on global issues.

The effective schools process includes extensive parental involvement. Parent and community support for our program is a significant factor in the success of Mifflin. Twice we have had individual parents selected in a statewide Volunteer Awards Program. The contributions of the Parent Teacher Association and the Parent Community Advisory Council, as well as partnerships with Adopt-A-School agencies in our community, are invaluable.

Staff Collegiality

The third factor responsible for the success of Mifflin International is the outstanding staff. A collegial spirit of cooperation and common mission exists among the principals, secretarial staff, custodians, lunchroom staff, teachers, and other support personnel. Some of the staff members had worked in other buildings or in the previous Mifflin Middle School. In many ways I am sure it was easier to work in those schools with a more regular schedule without the many special events, blocks of time flexibility, and other less structured facets found in the international program. I am sure the custodians' jobs were easier before the many unexpected requests that innovative, spontaneous instruction often generates. The cafeteria staff probably had more structured lunch periods before Mifflin International's program began. The Mifflin lunchroom occasionally is used for special meetings and differing numbers of students eat during the three lunch periods. The office staff must sometimes think that it was easier working in the office and attendance areas when there were not so many special programs for students and when the schedule was more structured with classes meeting at the same place and time every day. The outstanding custodial, lunchroom, and office staffs, however, quickly gained enthusiasm for the new international studies and foreign languages program from the beginning of the new school. Everyone continually tries to plan ahead and inform all affected persons of schedule changes and needs for special events. Still the custodians work hard to provide necessary assistance with room set-ups, microphone placements, room arrangement changes, and the general work of getting the job done, often with very little notice. The lunchroom and office staffs are flexible also in their efforts to meet immediate needs often with little notice. We cannot measure the contributions made by all of these persons in the final outcome of student achievement, but they are certainly substantial.

The principal of Mifflin International has always encouraged and permitted reflective practice among the teachers. As a continually reflective person himself, he has given individuals and teams of teachers considerable leeway to make positive change. During the first year of the international program, each sixth-grade teacher taught two or three different subjects with only two of the eight teachers teaching social studies. The teachers felt they should each have a social studies class, so they could more closely follow the content of social studies in planning instruction for each of their other classes. When the sixth-grade team devised a plan that included schedule changes so that each teacher would have one social studies class, the principal approved the plan and worked out the necessary schedule changes. After much reflection among grade levels, it was decided in succeeding years that the same schedule would be initiated in the seventh grade. Each seventh-grade teacher now has a social studies class with his or her homeroom students. Now they are able to infuse the social studies/global/international topics into their individual specialty of reading/language arts, math, or health/science.

Cooperation among the principal and teachers has also helped Mifflin to keep staff members who might otherwise have transferred to other schools. When the German language teacher received certification in computer instruction, it was agreed that she would move to Mifflin's new computer resource teacher position. From that position all students and staff benefited from her outstanding efforts to enrich students' foreign language learning through computer work. When an eighth-grade teacher became certified to teach elementary grades and indicated a desire to teach at those levels, the principal worked out a reassignment of teachers among grade levels so that the teacher could move to sixth grade. The collegial spirit and high esteem that teachers feel for their positions is evidence that teachers work hard to keep their positions at Mifflin.

The teachers have played the most vital role in the success of Mifflin. Their willingness to become devoted to the reflective process, with its ensuing hard work, has resulted in the development of many special programs within the school (e.g., Operation Aware, Junior Great Books, Model United Nations, MathCounts). During weekly formal team meetings with me and daily informal lunch and conference pe riod meetings, teachers continually discuss, consider, plan, and evaluate what has been happening, what is currently happening, and what will be happening in relation to team instruction and school-wide policies and procedures. At formal team meetings involving teachers from five teams (sixth-grade team, seventh-grade team, eighth-grade team, foreign language team, and unified arts team), teachers consider a variety of topics. All other teachers such as the competency based reading and math consulting teachers, the special education teachers, the librarian and guidance counselor meet during their conference period with any of the teams.

Teachers have been willing to reflect regularly on ways to improve the program through their individual and team personal and professional development and growth. As stated earlier, the constant changes in local, national, and international events and issues make for a variety of subject matter considerations. Often teachers will delve into a study generated by student interest. For example, a group of eighth graders became interested in the yearly monsoon and resulting devastation in Bangladesh. The eighth-grade team of teachers used that interest to develop a three-week study of that area of Asia that culminated in a grade level ceremony in which $350 was donated to the American Red Cross for a school in Bangladesh. Although the focus remains the same, the content of the program, whether we call it global education or international studies, often changes. Our teachers use those changes to provide innovative, enriching instruction.

Teachers work hard to share their university level, inservice, and workshop learning with all staff. Many teachers have completed their master's degrees or are in the process of doing so since coming to Mifflin. Many have taken advantage of the global education degree program in the social studies department at Ohio State University, which has had a marked effect on the staff and instruction at Mifflin International. Mifflin teachers have regularly attended and presented sessions at local, state, and national social studies and foreign language conferences. They exchange resources and instructional ideas gained from these conferences during team meetings or special staff meetings. Reflection as to each teacher's worldview and its influence on instruction is an important part of the growth of the Mifflin program.

Merry Merryfield (1993) identifies three characteristics of global education that require sustained reflection: 1) global education involves both knowledge and perception, 2) it is one of the more ambiguous innovations in education today, and 3) it is controversial. Mifflin teachers are familiar with these characteristics of global education. Continued reflection with students, parents, and school staff is helping them creatively plan and implement Mifflin International's program.

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Chapter Three

Critical Reflection on Classroom Practice: Teaching as an Investigative Activity

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It is obvious that we learn by doing, but although obvious, the statement is not trite. Just as we learn to cook or ride a bicycle by cooking or riding, we learn to teach by teaching. In this chapter, I will describe two ways we learn through teaching: first, we learn about what we teach, and second, we learn about how to teach. It is these capacities for learning that makes teaching an investigative activity.

Assumptions About Teaching as an Investigative Activity

The notion of teaching as an investigative activity is based on three assumptions. First is that teachers are, or at least ought to be, reflective practitioners. There are several ways to think about reflective practice, but Dewey describes a natural human tendency toward reflectiveness that transcends many of these differences. In *How We Think*, Dewey (1933, 83) suggests:

> there is an innate disposition to draw inferences, an inherent desire to experiment and test. The mind at every stage of growth has its own logic. It entertains suggestions, tests them by observation of objects and events, reaches conclusions, tries them in action, finds them confirmed or in need of correction or rejection.

This inquisitiveness and experimentation are crucial in conceptualizing teaching as an investigative activity.

The second assumption is that teaching ought not be a solitary activity. Individuals can seldom cope successfully with the problems faced in schools; solutions require collective thought and action. For teaching to be an investigative activity, it is insufficient for individual teachers to be reflective practitioners; it is, instead, necessary for teachers to become active members of a critically reflective community. A critically reflective community is characterized by opportunities for dialogue, a sense of safety, and an appreciation for the pragmatic nature of knowledge about teaching, i.e., that there are no certainties and that all knowledge claims are provisional.

A third assumption in seeing teaching as an investigative activity is a commitment to improvement—in one's self, in one's colleagues, and in one's school. There is not much reason for investigation if it does not lead to positive changes in us as teachers or in our workplaces.

Learning About What to Teach

Although we as teachers have received abundant education, we will never be in a position to know all that we wish to teach. To teach, we must always be in an investigative mode, learning for ourselves about what it is that we wish to teach our students. We can all recall from our college days a professor who taught generations of students from the same aged set of yellowed lecture notes. While we laughed about the rehearsed asides and jokes, we witnessed a poor example of teaching. What we teach and how we do so can never be taken for granted. Preparing to teach and the acts of teaching itself are valuable opportunities to develop our knowledge about that which we are teaching.

Investigations of what to teach can be motivated in a number of ways including the introduction of technology, the reconceptualization of

prior knowledge, or the formulation of new knowledge. The most obvious example of technology that affects what and how we teach must be the introduction of computers into schools and homes. Social studies teachers have long used simulations effectively in teaching, and the explosion in available computer software extends this capability tremendously. The teaching of geography, for example, could be changed by the introduction of the game-like software "Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?" The object of this game is to capture Carmen Sandiego, a villain aided by a band of entertaining bad guys, as she evades the authorities by traveling all over the world. To capture Carmen Sandiego, one must employ deductive reasoning skills, use resource materials to continue the game, and learn about the places in the world that this villain might be. This software provides an entertaining yet informative means for learning geography and is just one illustration of how using technology might change what we teach. Other examples are desktop publishing software that allows for producing high quality newsletters, journals, and documents; on-line search capabilities that expand historical and contemporary resources available to teachers and students; and word processing for improving written work.

Through reconceptualizing knowledge, we also learn about what to teach in social studies classrooms. These reconceptualizations are sparked in a number of ways but are often concomitant with celebrations of historical events, such as the lively debate about the causes and consequences of the French Revolution during its 1989 bicentennial.[1] A timely example of knowledge reconceptualization is the consideration every social studies teacher gives when teaching about Christopher Columbus especially during the celebration of the quincentenary of Columbus's first landing in the Americas. Although most of us were taught that Columbus "discovered" America, an idea promoted in many social studies and reference texts,[2] this Euro-centric view has clearly and appropriately become problematic. Part of the consideration of what to teach involves what language to use: "Columbus discovered America"; "Columbus encountered America"; "Columbus invaded America." Each statement has proponents and a historical context in which it can be rendered intelligible. The "Columbus discovered America" version has held sway for many years, and teachers and students must now contemplate why that has been the case. It is not simply that this version is wrong; it is that this perspective conveys a socio-political view of historical events that is an essential element of the Columbus story. Similarly, the "Columbus invaded America" version has its historical roots in the recent and overdue voice given to indigenous peoples offended by an ethnocentric rendering of history in the Americas. Teachers may choose to present one version as the most sound, but students will most likely challenge such an approach.[3] Historical events are always open to reconceptualization, an occasion for teachers to investigate what it is they will teach.[4]

In addition to reconceptualizations of knowledge, we also must learn about what to teach because of the formulation of new knowledge. New knowledge is formulated all the time, although seldom in the form of discoveries one finds in the physical or biological sciences. More commonly we learn about new perspectives, some of which develop slowly over time while others are quite cataclysmic. World maps are a good example of knowledge that has evolved over time showing an ever-changing perspective on the world.[5] World maps are different in different times and places because of particular cultural experiences, and images of the world change when we obtain new or different information revealing cultural perspectives we take for granted. Just as an ancient Roman map reveals a world limited and connected in certain ways, so does a Mercator projection. As contemporary social educators we must acknowledge that, although the Mercator projection is most common and widely accepted, other per-

spectives might be more accurate such as, for example, the Dymaxion projection. Changes in world views can be precipitous, such as those resulting from the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Boundaries and identities have changed so quickly in Eastern Europe that the National Geographic Society changed its world map six times in six months.

Learning about what to teach is not simply a matter of acquiring knowledge to impart to students. As teachers, we also learn about what to teach through teaching. Students often challenge claims about what is true or real, and during classroom discussions and activities we as teachers learn even more about what we are teaching. Most teachers will not be fully prepared for the array of questions and interpretations students will bring to the Columbus story and will have to reformulate what they are teaching as they are doing so. Teachers who introduce alternative world maps will confront cultural knowledge that is difficult to change. In my own graduate level teaching, I count a class a success if students challenge my ideas or those in the material they read or if they offer sound novel interpretations of ideas and texts.

Learning About How to Teach

Many are the stories of beginning teachers who claim they learned little about teaching until they became teachers. Without delving into the myriad criticisms and defenses of preservice teacher education, the act of teaching is a powerful source of lessons on how to teach. As a doctoral student, I taught two sections of introductory educational psychology for preservice teachers. I hadn't much of a clue what to do or where to begin. Fortunately, a rich selection of textbooks in educational psychology was available, so I borrowed from these sources to decide what to teach. How to teach this class was not so clear, however. The one topic always covered in a course such as I was teaching is learning theories, typically including behavioral, cognitive, and humanist theories. One might imagine that knowing these theories would have helped me decide how to teach my classes, but in reality the more compelling source of advice was previous teaching experiences, those in which I had been either a teacher or student. My initial decisions about how to teach were based mostly on previous classroom experiences, not on principles of learning as espoused in theoretical frameworks. Although some connection between what I did as a teacher and the theoretical ideas I was teaching might have existed, this was not the logic I used in deciding how to teach nor in making modifications in my teaching (House, Mathison, and McTaggart 1989).

I taught two sections of the educational psychology course for several years and made many modifications in my teaching from semester to semester. Teaching moral development was one particularly thorny issue I recall confronting. Most introductory textbooks include a discussion of Kohlberg's theory, but I was eager for students to develop a critical perspective on a variety of theories including the then never mentioned work of Carol Gilligan. Over a period of many semesters, I varied how I introduced the topic, what I had students read, and the classroom activities in which we engaged when discussing moral development. It took about two years before I struck upon an approach that I felt achieved the results I desired—a sound understanding of the various perspectives and an ability to discuss the ideas critically. After doing some assigned readings, I introduced the topic by having students review a couple of scenarios containing ethical dilemmas of the sort used by Kohlberg. The scenarios were crafted to reflect the students' experiences; for example, one scenario involved an African-American sorority pledge being denied membership. After discussing their responses to the scenarios, students analyzed their responses using Kohlberg's and Gilligan's theories. Typically they were shocked (and insulted) to find themselves functioning at a lower stage of moral development in Kohlberg's theory and to find themselves adding information and contextualizing the scenarios

such as suggested by Gilligan's theory.

I did not, however, develop the ideas and strategies used for teaching moral development on my own. Doctoral students taught many sections of this course and met once a week to discuss their teaching. These discussions were helpful in developing alternate strategies as well as interpreting student responses. This group discussed a wide range of issues about teaching, and not everyone shared my particular frustration with teaching moral development. The group, however, provided a supportive and constructive context for discussing concerns about what and how to teach.

Without realizing it I was engaged in action research, although not consciously or systematically enough. Social psychologist Kurt Lewin (1946) coined the term "action research," which is a process that entails a spiral of steps consisting of planning, acting, observing, and evaluating the result of the action.[6] In action research, it is crucial that participants be responsible for the process, and although a consultant might be employed, the definition and solution of problems must come from the participants themselves. Action research provides a framework for systematic investigations by teachers: investigations of how to teach, what to teach, and how to improve schools.

An action research project begins with a thematic concern (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988), a general notion that something needs improvement. A thematic concern is an area in which teachers perceive problems of mutual concern which, if addressed, would result in an improvement in teaching, learning, or the conditions of teaching and learning. A thematic concern arises out of the experiences of teachers (and others such as administrators, parents, or students) and is arrived at through dialogue that focuses on revealing underlying beliefs and assumptions. This reflective process is crucial to any investigation in teaching since it is our unconsciously held beliefs that often inhibit us from changing in productive ways. For example, my desire to control my undergraduate classes led me to lecture on moral development rather than, for example, using discussion groups. Recognizing that I assumed the class needed controlling was a first step in freeing myself to try pedagogical strategies other than lecturing. Examples of thematic concerns are discipline in elementary classrooms; increasing parental involvement in schools; individualizing instruction; using homework review as a teaching opportunity; diminishing negative effects of mandated testing on teaching and curriculum; and limited opportunity for teacher involvement in curriculum decision-making.

Identifying a thematic concern leads to an analysis of the problem, including probable causes and possible solutions. In my teaching of moral development, we speculated that students were uninterested and non-critical in their understanding because the material presented was too abstract and unrelated to their own experiences. Assigning provocative readings was helpful but not sufficient and thus led to the creation of ethical dilemma scenarios very real to these students. This hypothesizing about causes and solutions must be tested by action on the teacher's part. Not until I tried different combinations of readings and activities could I know what would help undergraduate students obtain a more comprehensive and critical perspective on moral development. Being able to conclude that what I did made a difference required an evaluation of my actions. Level of student engagement, frequency with which moral development was chosen as a topic for a research paper, and performance on tests were the indicators I used to judge the success of my actions.

Action research provides a framework for conducting research in one's classroom to solve particular pedagogical problems, which may or may not be shared by colleagues. It is also a framework for investigating broader-based school problems. A thematic concern of this sort might be the effects of mandated testing on social studies teaching and learning. Teachers and administrators might agree that most objective mandated tests focus on factual recall of the type promoted by E.

D. Hirsch. These same educators might believe that analytic thinking about the nature of the social world is a more appropriate outcome of social education. However, these mandated, typically objective tests are often important because they are used to inform the institution and the public about whether good education is occurring. School personnel are faced with a dilemma: prepare students for the tests so that schools will look good, or prepare students to be good analytic thinkers who may not perform as well on the test. This is a no-win situation and a prime opportunity for action research. Recognizing it is difficult to change what have become common practices in schools (such as standardized testing), these practices often inhibit the quest for good education.

The plan for this project might include finding a replacement for current mandated tests that might resolve the dilemma and then testing out that alternative. Finding this alternative would require considerable reflection on the nature and purposes of assessment in schools. It is especially important in dealing with broad-based thematic concerns that action research be a collective activity with a shared commitment to finding a solution to the problem. Clearly, one teacher can devise ways to deal with the testing dilemma, but real change that improves education for all students and teachers must deal straightforwardly and explicitly with institutional constraints. The performance assessment movement in testing is an alternative, and in social studies in particular, the use of student portfolios is a reasonable replacement for objective tests. To be an effective action research project, however, teachers would have to negotiate certain conditions. Modifying current testing practices would be necessary, including perhaps a moratorium on mandated testing. This would permit educators to formulate and test an alternative such as student portfolios. A period of investigation would be necessary to assess the value of student portfolios and a willingness to consider that modifications might be necessary. Good investigations within the action research project do not presume to prescribe solutions in absence of empirical evidence of success. A project such as the one suggested above must satisfy the assumptions outlined early in this chapter, i.e., teachers must be reflective, they must reflect and act collectively, and they must be committed to genuine improvement.

Action research provides a means by which teaching can be an investigative activity and from which teachers can benefit. The value of serious reflection on what happens in classrooms and schools to develop plans of action for change is evident, regardless of the success of the project. The following comments made by teachers who have conducted action research projects illustrate these benefits (Mathison and Ross 1992).

> First, I have come to realize that teachers sometimes accept various problems that arise in their classrooms as givens. For example, I believed that a noisy classroom is a given in kindergarten programs. . . . The reality of the matter is that problems don't have to be accepted if the teacher is willing to try out various solutions. Secondly, I have learned that although problems are resolvable, it is not always easy to pinpoint the crux of the problem. (Kindergarten teacher)

> Through the course of this project I learned several things, and much of this was because I was thinking seriously about what I do, what I want to accomplish, and reaching realizations about my ideals. . . . I must remember that realistically I can only hope to accomplish a certain number of goals. (High school music teacher)

> Most striking is the concept that the design and development of an instructional program is not a static "now it's finished" process. In order to be useful, the program must never be finished. At first this realiza-

tion is discouraging—we are goal driven and like to finish things. As one part of the program is planned, there are opportunities for improvement. In the process of using an activity, the goals for the activity are often seen as compounded rather than simple, and another approach is suggested. (Middle school science teacher)

Action research provides a framework for systematically thinking about what happens in classrooms and schools; for implementing planned actions where improvements are thought possible; and for evaluating the effects of actions with a goal of continuing the quest for improvement.

Promoting Teaching as an Investigative Activity

Many are the efforts to reform schools, some of which are discussed in this book. We are only beginning to realize the possibilities for schools to be changed from the inside: through the recognition of the power of teachers to think and act in ways that create improved educational experiences for children and improved working conditions for teachers. It is important to be vigilant in defining teaching in ways that encourage positive changes and avoid the pernicious notions of teaching as skilled labor.

Shared decisionmaking, site-based management, teacher empowerment, and induction models in teacher education are all notions that capitalize on the idea of teaching as an investigative activity. This idea must be nurtured and promoted to encourage change in schools. To do this we must satisfy the assumptions outlined at the beginning of this chapter, i.e., teachers must be reflective, part of a collective, and interested in improvement. If Dewey is right, these are natural tendencies that will develop into dispositions in hospitable contexts. Instead of reforms that tell educators what to do and how, reforms should encourage educators to investigate what to do and how.

Notes

[1] See, for example, Simon Schama's provocative retelling of the French Revolution in *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1989).

[2] Even the *Timetables of History: A Horizontal Linkage of People and Events* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979) typically uses the phrase "discovers" to mark significant historical encounters.

[3] My stepdaughter was the only third grader in her class to dispute the notion that Columbus discovered America, informing her teacher that Columbus could not "discover" America because somebody already lived there. Although she may have been alone in holding this view, it required that her teacher acknowledge the problematic nature of the statement "Columbus discovered America" and fortunately she respected, even rewarded, my stepdaughter's perspective.

[4] For information about the Christopher Columbus story, see the NCSS position statement "The Columbian Quincentenary" in *Social Education* (October 1991), pp. 346–348; and *1492: Discovery? Encounter? Invasion?* prepared by the Michigan Interfaith Committee on Central American Human Rights, 1991.

[5] From September 1991 through March 1992, *Social Education* featured a series on European cartography. This is a good example of the changing information about world views we can see by studying maps.

[6] For readers interested in conducting action research, consult Kemmis and McTaggart's *Action Research Planner* (1988); Rob Walker's *Doing Research: A Handbook for Teachers* (London: Routledge, 1989); and Joe L. Kinchloe's *Teachers as Researchers: Qualitative Inquiry as a Path to Empowerment* (Bristol, Penn.: Falmer Press, 1991).

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Chapter Four

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Reflective Practice and Professional Growth: Using Action Research in the Elementary Classroom

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Reflecting back on my first year of teaching, it is apparent that I knew very little about evaluating my classroom practice. Although it was always clear when a lesson failed or an objective was not met, I did not know how to examine my practice in a systematic, step-by-step process.

Fortunately, from the start of my career, I have worked with colleagues and administrators who understood the importance of and encouraged professional growth and curriculum improvement. In spite of my supportive work environment, however, I still had fundamental questions about how I could improve my classroom curriculum and teaching: What approaches or strategies are available? Where do we learn how to use these approaches? How do I identify an area of concern and begin the process of improving my practice and the curriculum students experience in my classroom?

As a result of my questioning and searching, I have found action research a useful framework for addressing issues of professional growth and curriculum development. In this chapter, I will briefly describe the action research process and how I have used it to understand and improve my practice as an elementary school teacher.

Action Research as a Framework for Reflective Practice

Action research is a process developed by Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist in the 1940s. Lewin's model was developed as a result of efforts to address social problems such as creating more racially integrated communities in post-World War II America. Action research involves the development of a plan of action to address a specific problem or question, followed by a recurring cycle of action, observation, and reflection, which results in a revised plan for the next action step.

At first glance, I thought action research was not a particularly novel concept. It seemed to describe what I had always been doing in my classroom, that is, creating a plan, teaching to that plan, and then assessing the results. To a certain extent I was right. The difference between my usual approach to teaching and action research is that the action research framework allowed me to organize and systematically examine my practice so that reflection became a more focused and manageable activity.

I had always tried to take a few minutes after teaching a lesson to review it in my mind, and perhaps briefly discuss what happened with a colleague. For me, action research is a way to make formal an approach I was already using, writing out questions or objectives, following specific steps to meet each objective, and working with other people as resources. This task takes a little time to get accustomed to, but I have found the rewards are priceless.

The Action Research Planner, written by Stephen Kemmis and Robin McTaggart (1988), is the guide I use for taking me through the process. The process begins with a plan and then careful consideration of where you would like to invest your improvement efforts. Flexibility is essential since, just as in other aspects of teaching, you must

frequently reassess the plan of action. The plan of action is developed after identifying a field of action, exploring opportunities, and assessing possibilities and constraints. The first step in the planning process is to formulate a general idea of what you are looking to change in your teaching or curriculum. I try to remember that the definition of success need not be an immediate radical change. A small step in the right direction may appear modest, but it can be successful because the action research process emphasizes taking successive small steps toward a larger goal. Miracles rarely happen in one lesson, so teachers should set realistic expectations.

Conducting reconnaissance is a necessary part of my planning process. This allows me to describe what is happening now and to ask questions about how others will potentially be affected by my actions, as well as to consider the constraints, opportunities, and possibilities that exist in the situation. The field of action is defined through my reconnaissance and describes my tasks. I write out the results of my reconnaissance and share these ideas with a trusted colleague. The questions I try to answer include: Why do I see a need for improvement? What are some of the possibilities for improvement and what is the reason for these changes? Is there anything that will remain unchanged?

The action stage is the teacher in action—implementing the first action step. It is important to monitor the effects of the action as well as the action itself; naturally, evidence is collected as a way of observing the action step. This evidence serves as a transition into reflection where rethinking and discussing lead to increased understanding of the situation and planning for the next action step. It is always helpful to raise more questions for the revised plan of action.

Monitoring is probably the most important part of the general plan because this aspect of action research will be most helpful in reflection. I find a daily log or journal to be the best approach. If possible, I make sure to record my impressions immediately following the action. Another valuable tool is videotaping. It is best to have the equipment around for a few days, randomly taping students and teachers, so that everyone has an opportunity to adjust to its presence. This get-acquainted period is also beneficial because it takes a few viewings to move beyond the awkwardness of seeing yourself on video.

Include among your strategies a trusted colleague to observe the action. I have found working with a colleague is an excellent way to observe and collect data in an effort to support professional growth. Speaking to the students is also an advantageous way of getting feedback on your actions. They generally have nothing to lose by being honest. Once you have taken the action steps, monitoring with other aids is essential.

Formulating the plan itself is where frustration can mount, but once I went through the action research cycle a few times, it became easier. I simply had not been accustomed to writing down my own observations. Being able to read my accounts of lessons or see them on tape helped to jog my memory and keep the initial feelings and instincts after a lesson. This plays a major role in facilitating reflection.

Creating a timetable helps to set expectations and then follow through on the plan of action. Included are the general plan, first action step, evaluation or reflection, a revision, and the several action steps in the plan. Sharing this timeline with a colleague can result in comments about realistic constraints or raise pertinent questions regarding the plan itself.

I was always a bit hesitant to try new ideas, perhaps because I was afraid of the uncertainty of the results. However, the action research approach gave me a stable framework for planning and evaluating new teaching strategies. As a result, I am better able to reflect and grow professionally, as well as improve the curriculum activities. Below are descriptions of two action research projects that I have conducted in my classroom during the past several years.

Case One: Increasing Participation in Social Studies

When I was teaching fifth grade, the boys in the social studies class appeared to be much more interested in the subject than were the girls. I wanted to know why this was happening. In assessing the situation, I had to decide if this was a manageable issue to investigate, if it was important, and if someone would be available to help should I need assistance. I had a mental picture of the classroom setting, with all students participating in social studies. I hoped that all students could become engaged in social studies, especially the girls. I thought that the boys should see a change in the girls' participation in social studies lessons, but on a larger scale, I wanted to send a message that no subject matter area was the exclusive purview of either gender.

In this situation my greatest constraint was time. Thirty to forty minutes does not seem sufficient to accomplish this type of change. My plan, however, was for implementing these changes over a period of time.

I identified the following possible outcomes. The girls might become more involved and see themselves as participating in all parts of the class curriculum including social studies. On the other hand, it was possible that the girls might choose to keep to themselves, as a distinct group within the class. I also hoped that the boys' high level of participation in social studies would remain unchanged even as the girls' level of participation increased. I realized, however, if I focused my efforts on change in the girls' participation, there was a chance this would affect the boys.

The first action step I took was constructing a detailed account of exactly what I would do differently during my social studies lessons. First, I tried asking the girls more questions; however, this was not successful. Then, I changed my questioning strategy and focused almost exclusively on asking questions of the boys. This time, all questions were directed to the boys instead of sharing the floor. Care must be taken when shifting strategies like this, to be sure the action step sustains itself long enough to be effective. My projection was that the girls would notice that only boys were participating and express their discontent, which would facilitate discussion of both the social studies content and who was participating in class. The long-term effect for which I was looking was equal participation in class. Of course, I had to consider that this plan could backfire and my actions might further segregate the classroom. To avoid this, I used social studies content that was likely to be of interest to the girls in the class. I opened my social studies class with a discussion of women in government, focusing on the limited number of women serving in the U.S. Congress. My questions included: Why aren't there more women in government? Do we need more? Are they efficient? If so, why aren't there more? Should they be permitted to fill these jobs?

I gave myself two social studies lessons to carry out my first action step. Following this, I would discuss my plan with my students, keeping in mind that I must concentrate on the effects of my action, not on how I communicated to the class.

My observations coincided with that of my colleague's. We both saw that it took almost half the class time for the girls to become restless with the topic, and when they did raise their hands and were not called on, it was apparent that some frustration was beginning to surface.

During the second class, the girls were starting to ignore the rule of raising hands. I was not calling on them, so they began calling out answers. During the third class, when I revealed to the students what was going on, they were very responsive. They were also amused and a bit angry at my tactics. I explained that the passive role of females in many aspects of life is part of a bigger problem— one that extends far beyond the social studies classroom. What followed was a discussion of social studies curriculum and the lack of women mentioned in history.

My students asked some unanticipated questions: "If this is what the curriculum is, why are

the girls supposed to care anyway?" "Are all textbooks written with just men in mind?" "Are there any written about women?" "Can we buy them?" "If there are so few women in government, who will write about them?" Suddenly, I felt as if a whole world had been opened.

In reflecting on the results of my first action step, I developed a revised plan and launched into the second action research cycle using the same procedure: constructing a general plan, taking action, observing, and reflecting. I was careful to continue to share and discuss my revised plan with the same colleague. His comments were vital as he has been a part of the process from its inception.

I could see issues for which I had not prepared. Being flexible, therefore, is necessary in conducting action research, as it is every day in the classroom. Would I be able to stimulate this kind of discussion again? Naturally, I will not be able to do this all of the time. Many questions about my classroom had been raised, providing the stimulus for further reflection and action on my practice. The main goal of the project was to increase involvement of all the students in the social studies curriculum; this was achieved.

Case Two: Writing Skills

I had another opportunity to use the action research process with my sixth grade class. During numerous language arts lessons, I noticed students had difficulty using appropriate transitional and descriptive words. My usual lesson, in which I asked students to describe an amusement park or fair, was not very successful. I decided to try a cooperative learning approach. My idea was that students in small groups would write several paragraphs using descriptive and transitional words. I was hoping that students would be more likely to challenge themselves when compared to other groups in this situation.

Many students do not enjoy writing assignments or lack confidence in their writing skills. I hoped that with a little help they might find a hidden skill, simply enjoy a writing exercise, or at the very least, accomplish the task at hand. As in case one above, I wrote out my ideas in steps for the plan, which is important for me in clarifying questions and concerns for study.

In relation to the strategic action as a process, my timetable called for one forty-minute class period for the first lesson and another for the second writing assignment. The final draft of the independent assignment would be due the following day. I would speak with students after the final draft was handed in and before it was graded to get their reactions to the strategies I used. Two colleagues observed and were active participants. To monitor these lessons, I spoke with my colleagues immediately following the lesson. In addition, I videotaped the lesson and, as always, kept a journal detailing my thoughts, questions, and concerns about the class.

I chose to organize students into heterogeneous groups so that students with varying abilities could work together. I started to imagine all kinds of questions and concerns about grouping students in this way: What positive relationships might be built through this activity? What if more walls were built between students? Coming back to the strategic action, I tried to focus on increasing the use of descriptive and transitional words.

Each student, in groups of approximately five youngsters, was required to write two sentences on the topic presented. One transitional word and several descriptive words were to be used. Each person had his or her own paper, but linked sentences to one another by working together. Each group presented the results of their work after having fifteen to twenty minutes to revise and edit.

A brief visit to each group made sure all students were carrying out their responsibilities. Afterwards, they all shared their writing with the class. While implementing the first action step, I became aware of how difficult it would be to observe accurately how much students were participating. The activity itself did stimulate student interest. They seemed enthusiastic about the freedom to write, and all the buzzing about was some-

thing new. Students seemed unaware of the camcorder, which was an advantage. We did run out of time to share all results from groups, so we had to extend that portion of the lesson.

Although you must plan each action step carefully, your main focus should be on the results of this new activity. The proof of this activity's success was not in the activity itself, but in the follow-up lesson that was another writing assignment. In the follow-up activity, students were asked to write several paragraphs independently and then confer with each other to see if they improved their use of descriptive and transitional words. Did these students follow through on their own?

Students came to class the following day seemingly prepared to write. Some needed a little coaxing, and several went home with a rough draft completed. Since I expected much reflection should come from the results of the independent assignment, I was somewhat disappointed to see minimal improvement. The exceptional writers worked even harder than usual. The less able writers made a gallant effort to use more and exciting words. Students of average ability seemed to have the highest number of improved assignments.

My revised plan of a second action step was to continue monitoring written work to see if the students' use of transitional and descriptive words improved. I had not anticipated how difficult it would be to see long-term effects. Even though most students were on task, I was unable to measure the efforts of all students. When their work was shared with the class, I was able to get a better sense of what the groups had accomplished.

In this case, I broke my own rule: my expectations were too high. Believing that one lesson would have a lasting effect on writing was unrealistic. However, continually working on this area has proven to be worthwhile.

Continued reflection encourages me to ask myself if these effects will continue and ultimately result in long-term improved writing skills. Follow-up interviews with both of my colleagues as well as the students indicated that the activity promoted enjoyment of writing. Keeping a journal helped me to remember who was struggling in class, so when I saw the final projects of these students, I could make a more focused assessment. I found the action research framework has helped me complete more accurate student assessments. Comparisons of students' individual work and the group activity illustrated inconsistency in results that provided the beginning concern for the next action in the action research process.

Conclusion

Anyone reading this chapter can see that many questions raised by reflection on practice have no predictable answers. I suppose all questions do not have answers, but I feel a strong responsibility to search them out. Perhaps one of the benefits of this investigative approach to teaching is finding out that I cannot always immediately resolve problems of practice. However, I have additional resources for improving my practice. Although many current approaches to teacher evaluation fail to foster professional growth among teachers, I have found systematic reflection on my practice is always a positive learning experience.

I believe professional growth means being able to have the power to resolve difficult issues. Maybe it also means accepting some things that I cannot change while persevering towards my own goals. It is my hope that my students will see this and follow the model I try to set in their lives.

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Chapter Five

Teachers as Curriculum Theorizers

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Metaphors of Teachers and Curriculum

The language we use to describe, explain, and justify what we do as teachers influences our activities as teachers as well as the patterns of social relationships we have with students, colleagues, and others involved in education and schooling.

Embedded within the language of schooling and its images and metaphors are certain assumptions about means and ends: how children learn, appropriate teacher-student relations, what knowledge is of most worth, the purposes of schools. Some common metaphors used to describe the work of teachers include gardener, facilitator, guide, pilot, navigator, mapmaker, gatekeeper. Each of these metaphors communicates certain assumptions about the teaching-learning process and the interaction between teachers and curriculum.

This interaction between teachers and curriculum is the focus of this chapter. Let us begin by exploring two questions: a) What are our images of teachers in relation to curriculum? and b) How do these images shape the work of curriculum development and teaching?

In the recent *Handbook of Research on Curriculum*, Clandinin and Connelly (1992) describe how educational research, from its genesis as a formal field, has segregated inquiry into issues of "curriculum" and "teaching." The distinction between curriculum and teaching has become commonplace, and the effect of its institutionalization is rarely a matter of consideration. For example, "in the United States the land grant colleges institutionalized a distinction between curriculum and instruction (C & I), either by creating 'C & I' departments or separating the two by establishing instructional departments alongside elementary and secondary education departments" (Clandinin and Connelly 1992, 364). This organizational distinction at the university level spawned degree programs, which produced specialists to work in schools, further entrenching the separation of curriculum and teaching.

The logic of the distinction between curriculum and instruction is founded on the belief that decisions about aims or objectives of teaching must be undertaken prior to decisions about how to teach.[1] The distinction between curriculum and instruction then is fundamentally a distinction between ends and means. For people engaged in research, this distinction provides a way to place boundaries on their inquiry into the complex worlds of teaching and schooling. In schools, this distinction fits into a bureaucratic structure that seeks to categorize areas of concern with an emphasis on efficiency in decisionmaking. This distinction has produced abstract categories of research and discourse that bear little resemblance to the lived experience of teachers in the classroom, where ends and means are so thoroughly intertwined. This does not mean, however, that the language and categories of research are irrelevant to teachers.

Language use, educational practices, and social relationships contend with each other in the formation of professional identity of teachers and the institutional culture of schools (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988). For example, when curriculum and instruction (ends and means) are conceived as independent entities, curriculum development activities become the work of one group and curriculum implementation becomes the work of another. This division of labor, in turn, affects the social relations between these groups as one group defines the goals or conceptualizes the work and the other is responsible for accomplishment of

the goals (Ross 1992). The apparent indifference of educational research and bureaucratic decisionmaking to the reality of classroom teaching creates unequal participation and power relations. The implication is that we must closely examine the language of educational practice because it influences our activities and social relations within education.

The Conduit Metaphor

With regard to curriculum development and educational reform, the claim that "teachers make a difference" most often means that teachers make or break implementation efforts and "consequently must receive proper inservice training so that they make it rather than break it" (Parker 1987, 7). This is the language of "teacher-as-curriculum conduit," and it has been the dominant language of curricular and school reform throughout this century. As Clandinin and Connelly (1992) point out, the word "curriculum" has traditionally emphasized programs of study or formal courses, not classroom practice. The social studies curriculum, then, meant history and social science subject matter presented over some period of time (e.g., middle school years, a grade, or a semester). The teacher's role in curriculum development and reform is most often as the conduit through which the curriculum is delivered. How has this metaphor operated in social studies? How has it affected the way social studies teachers are perceived?

The origin of social studies in schools illustrates the linkage between social studies curriculum and disciplinary subject matter. First, as Saxe (1991) points out, the "traditional history curriculum" that emerged in schools in the 1890s found its rationale in the alliance of psychology and "scientifically based" history. Historians shaped conceptions of the nature of the history curriculum in school through their influence on educators, textbook authors, curriculum writers, and publishers:

> Good textbooks . . . were the basis of good teaching, and the good textbook, in order to be published, prudently followed the guidance of the two preeminent national history committees. For textbooks at the turn of the century this meant attending to the recommendations and suggestions of the Madison Conference and the later Committee of Seven (Saxe 1991, 29).

Arthur Schlesinger, Sr., a preeminent American historian in the early part of this century, put it this way: "whether we like it or not, the textbook not the teacher teaches the course" (quoted in Saxe 1991, 29).

Second, the roots of our contemporary social studies curriculum are found in the conflict among traditional historians, social scientists, and social reformers over the purposes of history in school in the early part of this century (see Saxe 1991; Lybarger 1991). The organization of social studies as a curricular area in schools was the result of the 1916 report of the Committee on the Social Studies of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education of the National Education Association.[2] The current pattern of topics and courses in social studies is largely the result of recommendations of the 1916 Committee, whose influence was enhanced when the American Historical Association joined in the social studies movement with the formation of the AHA Commission on Social Studies in 1929 (Saxe 1991). In addition to using the term "social studies" to refer collectively to history, economics, political science, sociology, and civics, the Committee's recommendations established the dominant curricular scope and sequence in secondary social studies:

Grade 7	*World Geography/ World History*
Grade 8	*American History*
Grade 9	*Civics*
Grade 10	*World History*
Grade 11	*American History*
Grade 12	*American Government/ Problems of Democracy*

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Although variations are found among them, state-approved curriculum frameworks generally institutionalized the 1916 "prototype" of social studies (Marker and Mehlinger 1992).

More recent social studies curricular reform efforts also illustrate the conduit metaphor, such as the numerous innovations developed in the 1960s and 1970s, known collectively as the New Social Studies. The purpose of the New Social Studies was to "capture the main ideas and current approaches to knowledge represented by the academic disciplines" (Marker and Mehlinger 1992, 838). Curriculum projects such as Man: A Course of Study (MACOS) and the High School Geography Project focused on inquiry methods and the "structure of the disciplines" approach. Although social studies specialists helped in the development of new social studies materials (e.g., Newmann 1970; Oliver and Shaver 1966), the curricular focus was on the academic disciplines.

Although the New Social Studies was far removed from the teacher-proof approach to curriculum development reflected in Schlesinger's comments above, it is an exemplar of teacher-as-curriculum conduit thinking. Teachers were viewed as active implementors of curriculum; however, they were not assumed to be full partners in the creation of the curriculum (see, for example, Jewett and Ribble 1967). Strategies for promoting the use of New Social Studies materials focused on preparing teachers to faithfully implement the developers' (experts in academic disciplines) curricular ideas. For example, schools could not adopt the MACOS program unless teachers were specially trained (Marker and Mehlinger, 1992).

As the three examples above illustrate, curriculum development in social studies has been clearly linked to the subject matter disciplines and thought of as separate from classroom practice. Although the notion of teacher-as-curriculum conduit is firmly etched in the history of social studies in schools, it is also a pervasive metaphor in all current curriculum development and reform efforts. Centralization of curriculum through state frameworks has been coupled with strict accountability approaches, most often in the form of state-mandated tests, in what has become a world-wide phenomenon (Smyth 1991).

In New York, for example, current curriculum reform efforts are focused on increasing the power of the state to define the content of the curriculum (Ross 1992). Although widespread efforts across the state aim at increasing participative forms of school-based decisionmaking, simultaneous efforts increase managerial intervention and reduce teacher autonomy. The state has encouraged shared decision-making practices in local schools and more latitude for local educators to decide how students should be taught. At the same time, the state is requiring teachers to work within more rigidly structured curriculum frameworks than in the past, and these are coupled with numerous state-mandated tests. Measurement-driven curricular reforms such as those in New York reduce the range within which teachers have the opportunity to exercise judgment on the curriculum. In addition, this approach to curriculum reform raises ethical issues about means-ends justification (Mathison 1991; Madaus 1988) and sends messages to teachers such as: "curriculum development is not your responsibility," "minimum competence is the desired outcome," and "we don't trust you" (Brooks 1991).

Clandinin and Connelly (1992), in their analysis of numerous curriculum reform and school change efforts, concluded that one of the major outcomes was a view of curriculum development as a form of imposed teacher development. "Good" teachers, in these projects, were defined as those who commit themselves to project goals; "there is also a sense that participation is not valued in itself or for the education of teachers but because it contributes to project goals" (Clandinin and Connelly 1992, 374).

Teachers as Mediators of Curriculum

The ends-means split between curriculum and teachers indicates that teachers play little or no

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role in formal curriculum development. Many teachers internalized the ends-means distinction between curriculum and their work. As a result, they view their professional role as instructional decision-makers not as curriculum developers (see Thornton 1991). What is clear from studies of teacher decision-making, however, is that teachers do much more than select teaching methods to implement formally adopted curricular goals. As Thornton argues, teacher beliefs about social studies subject matter and student thinking in social studies, as well as planning and instructional strategies, together function to create the enacted curriculum of a classroom—day-to-day interactions among students, teachers, and subject matter. The difference between the publicly declared formal curriculum and the curriculum experienced by students in social studies classrooms is considerable. The enacted curriculum is "the way the teacher confirms or creates doubt about assertions of knowledge, whether some opinions are treated as facts while other opinions are discounted as unworthy of consideration" (Marker and Mehlinger 1992, 834–835). For example:

> One teacher may proclaim that one of democracy's virtues is a tolerance for many points of view, but in the classroom chokes off views inconsistent with his or her own. Another teacher may offer no assertions about the value of democracy, while exhibiting its virtues in his or her own behavior. (Marker and Mehlinger 1992, 835)

When examining the enacted curriculum in the classroom, as opposed to the formal curriculum represented in commission reports and courses of study, the teacher as mediator or curriculum-maker is the more appropriate metaphor. The key to the curriculum experienced in social studies classrooms is the teacher:

> Teachers' beliefs about schooling, his or her knowledge of the subject area and of available materials and techniques, how he or she decides to put these together for the classroom—out of that process of reflection and personal inclination comes the day-by-day classroom experience of students. This is not to say that social studies classes are not affected by factors such as the characteristics of the students enrolled, but only to emphasize that the teacher plays the primary structuring role. (Shaver, Davis, and Helburn 1980)

Although powerful cultural and institutional forces work to shape the professional role and identity of teachers, we know that teachers are not merely passive recipients of the culture of schooling (and the ends-means distinction found within it). Teachers are actively involved in shaping the culture of schooling. Recent studies have illustrated the interplay between individuals and institutional cultures and how the constraints of institutional structures (e.g., isolated nature of teachers' work; ends-means split in curriculum development and implementation) discourage collective and individual efforts (e.g., Cornett et al. 1992; Parker and McDaniel 1992; Ross 1987, 1988; Thornton 1992).

For example, the New Social Studies curricular reforms were unsuccessful because teachers, for the most part, did not use the materials or the innovative practices in their classrooms (Gross 1977; Shaver, Davis, Helburn 1980; Marker and Mehlinger 1992). This example illustrates the importance of focusing on the development of the enacted curriculum—i.e., interaction of teachers, students, and subject matter—instead of formal curriculum—i.e., materials and curriculum guides (Thornton 1991). Curriculum development and reform should move away from the traditional "teacher-as-curriculum conduit" metaphor to what Ben-Peretz (1989) describes as teachers as curriculum "user-developer."

Teachers as Curriculum Theorizers[3]

The language of teacher-as-curriculum conduit is based upon and perpetuates a distinction between ends and means, which is problematic in a number of ways. First, the ends-means distinction does not accurately reflect how the enacted curriculum is produced in

classrooms. Second, it justifies the separation of conception and execution in teachers' work, which reduces teachers' control over their work. Third, it marginalizes teachers in formal curriculum decisionmaking. As we begin to reconceive teaching in terms of reflective practice, we must avoid the limitations of ends-means distinctions. Reflective practice should not be limited to issues of how we teach social studies, but should include the perennial curriculum question: what knowledge is of most worth? Reflective practice is based upon the idea that teachers are full partners in curriculum development. Thinking of curriculum not as disciplinary subject matter but as something experienced in situations is one alternative (Connelly and Clandinin 1988). This Deweyan view of curriculum as experience conceives of teachers as part of the curriculum: "In this view, ends and means are so intertwined that designing curricula for teachers to implement for instructional purposes appears unreal, somewhat as if the cart were before the horse" (Clandinin and Connelly 1992, 365).

Dewey's image of the teacher and his or her role in the creation of school experiences can be found in *How We Think* (1933) and the essay "The Relation of Theory to Practice in Education" (1964). He argued that teachers must be students of both subject matter and "mind activity" if they are to foster student growth. He argued that a healthy teaching profession requires teachers who have learned to apply the habits of critical thought to their work. To do this, they must have a full knowledge of their subject matter and must observe and reflect on their practice. Dewey's notion of the classroom laboratory placed the teacher squarely in the center of efforts to understand educational practice and develop educational theory.

The professional knowledge of teachers is theoretical knowledge, or what Sanders and McCutcheon (1986, 54–55) called "practical theories of teaching." Practical theories of teaching are the conceptual structures and visions that provide teachers with reasons for acting as they do, and for choosing the teaching activities and curriculum materials they choose in order to be effective. They are principles or propositions that undergird and guide teachers' appreciations, decisions, and actions.

Such theories are important to the success of teaching because educational problems are practical problems. Practical problems are defined by discrepancies between a practitioner's theory and practice, not as gaps between formal educational theory and teacher behaviors (where ends and means are separated).

Teachers could no more teach without reflecting upon (and hence theorizing about) what they are doing than theorists could produce theories without engaging in the sort of practices distinctive of their activity. Theories are not bodies of knowledge that can be generated out of a practical vacuum, and teaching is not some kind of robot-like mechanical performance that is devoid of any theoretical reflection. Both are practical undertakings whose guiding theory consists of the reflective consciousness of their respective practitioners. (Carr and Kemmis 1986, 11)

Problems of teaching and curriculum are resolved not by discovery of new knowledge, but by formulating and acting upon practical judgment (Carr and Kemmis 1986). The central aim is to improve the practical effectiveness of the theories that teachers employ in creating the experienced curriculum. This aim presents problems in that sometimes teachers may not be conscious of the reasons for their actions or may simply be implementing curriculum conceived by others. This means that reflective practice must focus on the tacit cultural environment of teaching—the language, manners, standards, and values that unconsciously influence the classroom and school environment as well as the ways in which teachers respond to it. As Dewey (1916, 18) asserted in *Democracy and Education:*

> We rarely recognize the extent in which our conscious estimates of what is worthwhile and what is not are due to standards of which we are not conscious at all. But in general it may be said that the things which we take for granted without inquiry or reflection are

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> just the things which determine our conscious thinking and decide our conclusions. And these habitudes which lie below the level of reflection are just those which have been formed in the constant give and take of relationship with others.

Reflective practice is uncovering the taken-for-granted elements in our everyday experience and making them the target of inquiry. In reflective practice, teaching and curriculum making become problematic situations. Critical examination of the intersection of language, social relations, and practice can provide insights into our work as teachers and uncover constraints that affect our approaches to and goals for social studies education. As the chapters in this volume illustrate, teacher development and curriculum development are inextricably linked. Our efforts to improve and reform the curriculum of social studies hinges on developing practices among teachers and their collaborators (colleagues, students, research workers, teacher educators, parents) to encourage critical self-reflection and exploration of practical theories and the actions that they guide.

Notes

[1] See for example: Ralph Tyler's *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), and W. James Popham and E. L. Baker's *Establishing Instructional Goals* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970).

[2] Selected contents of three publications of the 1916 Committee on Social Studies are reproduced in Saxe (1991). These include "Statement of the Chairman of the Committee on Social Studies," 1913; *The Teaching of Community Civics*, 1915; and *The Social Studies in Secondary Education*, 1916.

[3] This section draws on E.W. Ross, J.W. Cornett, and G. McCutcheon, "Teacher Personal Theorizing and Research on Teaching," in *Teacher Personal Theorizing: Connecting Curriculum Practice, Theory, and Research* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 3–18.

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Chapter Six

Teachers Leading Change: The Bethlehem Lab School Project

James Nehring
Bethlehem High School

Good ideas for school reform are easy to come by. The greater challenge lies in translating good ideas into practice and getting them to stick. In the summer of 1988, a group of teachers in the Bethlehem Central School District (southwest of Albany in Delmar, New York) met to deliberate on a body of then-current school reform literature to see how it might relate to our students. We developed plenty of good ideas and dreamed wistfully of transforming our schools. That was the easy part. Since then, a number of us have attempted to implement just some of those ideas and we have found that the institutional barriers are enormous.

What follows is a narrative of our efforts to bring about substantial change in our school. It dwells primarily on political and institutional issues (building support, raising funds, addressing the needs of various interest groups). To a lesser extent it describes the experimental high school program, called the lab school, that has emerged from our deliberations and which we hope to implement soon.

Many have described their school of the future, but few explain how we get from the schools we have to that visionary ideal. The process for reaching that ideal is crucial. Indeed, the ways in which we attend to institutional and political issues will determine the success or failure of any innovative project.

Developing Ideas

In the spring of 1988 a group of teachers in the Bethlehem Central School District requested that the District fund a summer committee to review literature on school reform and develop a kind of think-tank report. The District funded our request, and we met for a week that summer to review the recent work of John Goodlad, Theodore Sizer, Ernest Boyer, Mortimer Adler, and others. We produced a report that was distributed to all District staff members. The week of discussions and the development of the report were stimulating exercises but did not directly result in any changes in school practice.

In the spring of 1989, a number of us decided to act, in a small way, to begin to change our practices. We developed a team teaching pilot project that paired an English class with a social studies class in a double block of time. We hoped to give the students an interdisciplinary focus and allow for greater scheduling flexibility by the teachers involved. When the program was formally announced in June, some members of the faculty showed resentment that they were being presented with a fait accompli. Why hadn't they been asked for their ideas? How would this affect class size for teachers not involved in the project? Despite the uproar, we went ahead. To our dismay, when we returned in September to begin the project and were given our class lists, we found that the paired classes were not perfectly paired. Some students were in one class but not the other. Attempts to remedy this inconsistency during the first two weeks of the school year caused only more irritation among the faculty, and we feared it might adversely affect the students. We scuttled the project.

Planning the Lab School

After some months of reflection, I began to think that the problem with the team teaching

project was that it interfered with other people's programs. We needed an experiment that would be completely separated from the high school so that existing programs would not be threatened. In the fall of 1989 I went to the District Superintendent with a proposal to look into the development of a laboratory high school—a kind of alternative school with an experimental focus open to all students and programmatically separate from the larger high school. He was interested but said he needed evidence of support before he could launch such a project. I decided then that I would approach the teachers' union with the idea. Union and faculty support was crucial as I had learned from the failed team teaching project.

I began to promote the idea at union meetings, conducted an informal interest survey among the high school faculty, and brought the results (which were favorable) back to the superintendent. The faculty interest was tempered by an important caveat. The faculty wanted to vote on the project before implementation. The administrative team or (I suspect) the school board did not give the idea of a faculty vote a warm reception, but they approved it and we began work, knowing the union and the faculty were behind the project. It was now October of 1990.

We then organized a design team of teachers and administrators. The team's immediate goal was to develop a grant proposal. This turned out to be an important exercise not only for raising some needed money, but also for clarifying our concept of the emerging lab school. We wanted the lab school to 1) maintain an interdisciplinary focus; 2) emphasize fewer topics of study in greater depth than the rest of the high school; 3) maintain a project orientation in which students would be mentored in self-designed courses of study; 4) actively build a community spirit with democratic governance; and 5) do all of this at existing per pupil expenditures. Our grant proposal was ready in April 1991, and we began circulating it immediately to a limited number of foundations where we had some sort of entree. In June, the Klingenstein Fund in New York made a generous contribution. On the strength of that, the Superintendent and I took the grant proposal door-to-door at area corporations and made a personal appeal. Owens-Corning, Roure Corporation, and General Electric provided generous donations also. We now had our funding. It was September 1991.

It was time to re-assemble the design team, which we did with several new additions as we decided to recruit members of departments not already represented. We were eighteen in all and faced the daunting task of designing within a year's time a lab school that was both visionary and practical—all in addition to our regular responsibilities as teachers and school administrators. For a couple of weeks we fumbled around, not sure how to organize. A plan emerged. We decided to divide the team into three small groups. The small groups were then given identical assignments: design a lab school within the guidelines outlined in the grant proposal by March of the following year. The grant money was used to pay teachers for released time from the classroom (five days each), planning sessions, and visits to exemplary schools. Our plan was to bring together the three groups with their completed designs in March for a series of intensive meetings from which we hoped a master design might emerge that incorporated the best ideas from all three.

We hoped that by dividing into three smaller teams, we could capitalize on everybody's best thinking. Also, from a logistical standpoint small groups are easier to coordinate than larger groups, especially in finding common dates for meetings. Finally, we hoped a spirit of friendly competition might push us to a higher level of excellence.

We went to work. The small groups began meeting, often at people's homes. An esprit de corps developed. Every other week the entire team would meet to update each other on progress in the small groups. We also set up several visits to exemplary schools around the Northeast. Typically, teams of three persons—one person from each small group—would go on a trip. We visited Thayer High School in Winchester, New Hampshire (under the principalship of Dennis

Littky), the Scarsdale Alternative School in Scarsdale, New York (Tony Aranella), and Central Park East Secondary School in Manhattan (Deborah Meier). Also, one member of the design team who was touring in Germany visited the Holweide Gesamtschule in Cologne.

Halfway through this portion of our work, I became fearful that the small groups might become territorial about their designs and that, by March, it would be impossible to overcome their small group loyalty in order to blend the three designs into one. Nothing about any of the personalities fed this concern, only a hunch that the dynamics of the process might cause such a problem. I mentioned this concern to the team, and we decided to hold the first of our intensive meetings in January to review, over the course of a half day, our work-in-progress. At this meeting I stressed that the work of the small groups should not be viewed as a competition where one design will win out. Rather, and everyone agreed, it should be seen as a collaborative effort. In that spirit we presented our work and encouraged all to freely raid ideas in other groups' designs that looked promising. This meeting also served to remind us of the impending March deadline and spurred us to get our work done.

Running simultaneous to the work of the design team were the efforts of another group. We had determined in the fall that community ideas and support would be essential to the project. We therefore established a community advisory group and invited our school's parent-teacher organization to select eight parents to join. We invited the student senate to do likewise with eight students, and a local banker agreed to serve as a representative of the town Chamber of Commerce. We held three dinner meetings with the Lab School Community Advisory Group during the winter months. We solicited their ideas for the lab school design and had them critique work-in-progress from the small groups.

By March, all three designs were submitted on time. We gave ourselves a week before the first meeting to review each other's work. During this week, the designs were farmed out to colleagues not on the design team who offered for a small honorarium to critique our work. These critiques were circulated among design team members. We then held three half-day meetings to build the master design. Fortunately, we were able to obtain the services of Harold Williams of the Rensselaerville Institute who served as facilitator of these meetings. His skillful guidance was essential in bringing us to consensus. We held the three meetings at five-day intervals to allow time for conversations and reflection between meetings. At the end of the third meeting we were largely in agreement on a master design. Then disaster struck.

The teachers' association and the District had been deadlocked in negotiations for a new contract to replace one that would expire in June. Impasse was declared, and the union asked its membership to withhold all voluntary services until a new agreement was reached. The lab school faced a crisis. We could forsake the union and carry on, or risk the project and show solidarity with our colleagues. Conscience demanded that we do the latter. For two months, the project languished. Our not-quite-completed design lay on a shelf. The many complex conversations already in progress that were needed to bring the work to completion were left hanging. And our financial sponsors. What would they think?

Just before school ended in June, an agreement was reached, and suddenly we had a contract. It was time to get back to work, but we were all scattering for the summer. During July and August, several of us stuck around to carry on the essential conversations among design team, administration, and board. Through correspondence we were able to check the final recommendations with our far-flung design team. With cooperation by all, we were able to reach agreement on a blueprint to be presented to the faculty and Board in September. Our sponsors provided no negative responses. In fact, one suggested it was wise that the design team had respected the bargaining process by suspending activity.

Briefly, the design consists of a four-period day with ninety-minute periods. Rotating through this schedule are three interdisciplinary courses, each of which meets three times weekly. Together, these courses (humanities, sciences, integrated arts) encompass all the major disciplines taught in a comprehensive high school. In addition to these, students must conduct two projects, governed by a contract, each semester. Every Wednesday morning, there is a special three-hour block set aside for a variety of activities, such as field trips, student performances, guest lectures, and community service projects. The entire curriculum is guided by a schoolwide theme selected jointly by students and faculty each semester. All coursework and projects focus on the theme.

Shortly after returning to school, the just-completed blueprint was distributed to all faculty, members of the board of education, leaders in the teachers' association, and members of our community advisory group. We scheduled meetings with all parties to solicit questions and concerns and to consider possible changes in the document based on issues raised at these meetings. Each member of the design team also agreed to present the blueprint to one of his or her classes to get a sample of student opinion. After this round of meetings, the design team held a work session to make final changes. In the course of these meetings, the board indicated its readiness to approve unanimously the program should the faculty vote go favorably.

At a regular faculty meeting in October 1992, the design team presented the final blueprint along with the superintendent, board president, and teachers' association president. The faculty voted on the following day—75 percent voted in favor of the program.

Evaluation

We have yet to achieve our goal because we have not yet changed school practice. After four years of dogged effort, the real work of school reform remains. It lies not in writing articles, making presentations at conferences, or conducting research. It lies in the day-to-day interactions with colleagues and community members on the site where change is to take place. It lies in fierce loyalty to a vision despite, perhaps, years of delay and setbacks.

School reform projects will vary depending on the setting and the personalities involved, so it is difficult and unwise to make generalizations from one experience. Nevertheless, some factors played an important role in the lab school project.

The talent, energy, and devotion of the team

Staying with this project has required persistent hard work for more than a year on a project that seemed to have little chance of success at the outset. Despite the odds, however, the design team brought its full powers to the effort as demonstrated in the resulting blueprint. We in public education enjoy an unusually high percentage of professionals with idealism and deep conviction to serve our students in the best way possible. Teachers and administrators are the chief resources in the national effort to re-invent our schools. To the extent that the lab school project has come to fruition it is because of people who have become the leaders in its design—Michele Atallah, Anthony Bango, Marsha Buanno, John-Michael Caldaro, John DeMeo, Jon Hunter, Jocelyn Jerry, Paul Machelor, Andrew Masino, J. Briggs McAndrews, Nicolas Nealon, Kenneth Neff, Rosemary Norelli, Roberta Rice, Asta Roberts, Joanne Smith, and James Yeara.

The faculty vote

The most potent factor in winning collegial support has been the promise that no program will go forward without a majority vote by the school faculty. Veteran teachers have seen at least a dozen education fads come and go, each one touted as "The True Way," and for each, teachers have been prodded to accept innovations by administrators who too quickly jumped on the band wagon. "Innovation" in the lexicon of teachers has become synonymous with nuisance. The vote, however, puts teachers firmly in control. The fact

that teachers are leading this project has given it favor in the eyes of many teachers. The vote also put pressure on the design team to include teachers in the process in every way possible. In short, the vote kept everyone honest.

At the same time, the vote introduced an element of risk into the project. After all our work, the faculty could simply reject it and effectively end the project. The faculty would have good reasons for rejecting it, and our task would be to address them before the project came to a vote.

Administrative support

The lab school is a risky venture from an administrative standpoint. Because of its high profile and potential for controversy—it involves other people's money, it is subject to a faculty vote, it seems to flout state regulations, and it challenges conventional attitudes about education—it requires the innovators to provide evidence that it has a high probability of success. That the superintendent (Leslie G. Loomis) and the high school principal (Jon G. Hunter) have supported and nurtured it is evidence of unusual courage.

A knowledge base of professional experience

Our knowledge base in designing the lab school has been mainly the collective professional experience of design team members. We filtered everything we read and all our observations at the schools we visited through our professional experience and intuition. For example, even though the literature suggests that heterogeneous grouping is superior to homogeneous grouping, our experience with kids says this is not always the case and, accordingly, the design of the Lab School allows for either arrangement under varied circumstances. This is as it should be. If a program is to succeed, the people who carry it out must believe in it. The best way to ensure that they believe in it is for them to design it themselves.

People who work directly with students generally know best what works. The mind of the practitioner is a crucible of academic learning and practical experience. Given the opportunity to reflect on all they know (an opportunity so often denied by the system), teachers and school administrators will do great things.

Visits to exemplary schools

Much more potent than academic research in honing our ideas have been the innovative practices of colleagues we observed in exemplary schools. Call this action research if you wish. The observations we made and the conversations we held at these schools presented us with new ideas and forced us to question our own thinking.

The competitive/cooperative nature of our design process

By dividing the design team into three small groups, we created a situation in which everyone's ideas could come forward. It is much harder to hide in a small group of five or six than in a committee of eighteen. At the same time, the understanding that no one of the three designs would be declared the winner and that all would get equal credit for the outcome was essential in generating a positive group dynamic.

A hook to get the attention of outsiders

The fact that I was a published author at the time this project began has influenced its development. This advantage was instrumental in getting the attention of administrators, the community, and foundations. This advantage, however, was a double-edged sword because authorship made my motives suspect in the eyes of some colleagues who perceived me as merely ambitious. It is important to remember that authorship is not the only possible attention getter, and every possible avenue should be explored.

Equal attention to the ideal and the real

Many innovations in schools flounder because they are either too idealistic or too pragmatic. Idealistic innovations may work in theory but have little concern for the setting in which they are intended to be implemented. Since a setting may include contentious personalities, labor/management issues, turf loyalty,

and tradition-bound attitudes, innovations may never get started. Other ideas may be too pragmatic, designed to fit in smoothly within the existing array of personalities, professional roles, regulations, and traditions. They sometimes get adopted but eventually might run along the same tired tracks to the same tired destinations.

The lab school project tried to balance the ideal and the real while keeping our vision steadily before us and understanding the system and stretching to the limits its tolerance for change. Innovators should continually ask themselves two questions that run in opposite directions: Are we compromising our vision, and can we make this happen in this school?

No gurus

The design team has remained intellectually in charge of this project throughout. Our design is eclectic and is the product of our own reflections intended for our own school. We did not accept the programs of any of the current education gurus because we feared that the demand for loyalty might supersede the need for a healthy skepticism and that matters of disagreement would be cast as issues of orthodoxy and heresy. We insisted on following our design because we recognized that schools and the people in them differ sufficiently from place to place and that no model, no program is suited to all. Nonetheless, we have benefited from the work of the best scholars and activists (particularly those referenced below). Three of the four schools we visited belong to the Coalition of Essential Schools, an organization that wisely recognizes the importance of local differences and the crucial necessity that teachers and communities lead change for their schools.

The conclusion of this project has yet to be enacted. The lab school proposal awaits implementation as this article went to press. Now the work begins, the real work of launching a new school with different practices and different expectations. To the extent that this project succeeds, the above assertions will be born out. To the extent that it fails, the assertions are placed in question. Either way, we will learn some valuable lessons about the limits of institutional change.

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Part II

Promoting Reflective Practice Among Beginning and Experienced Teachers

Chapter Seven

Reflective Practice and Teacher Education

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The question of how best to prepare individuals for the complex and multifaceted job of teaching has never been simple to answer. Well into the nineteenth century, the best preparation for teaching was considered simply for one to receive an education at, or preferably above, the level at which one would teach. As the century progressed, institutions specializing in the preparation of teachers—normal schools—began to emerge. At the normal school, prospective teachers would learn not only about the subjects they would teach in elementary schools but about pedagogy as well. Some dissatisfaction arose with this idea of teacher preparation. John Dewey, for example, was concerned that learning pedagogy placed too much emphasis on practicing routines and discrete skills and not enough on decisionmaking and the development of judgment. "For immediate skill," Dewey (1964, 320) wrote, "may be got at the cost of power to go on growing." Despite such concerns, the move toward teaching future teachers a set of routines and behaviors continued. By the mid-twentieth century, the preparation of teachers had moved from specialized institutions, such as the normal school and, later, the teacher's college, to universities. There, it was believed, prospective teachers would be well educated and would also learn the pedagogical and interpersonal skills needed for effective teaching.

This move to the university was a significant one for the development of thinking about what it means to prepare teachers and about the work of teaching itself. It further developed the notion of teaching as effective and appropriate routines and behaviors, and it grounded this notion in social science research. Good research would enable educators to determine the best routines and behaviors for effective teaching. These in turn would be taught to teachers, who could then develop the skills needed to teach well. It was the university, not the schools, that came to be seen as centers for research. Universities would produce the knowledge of effective teaching and transmit that knowledge to preservice teachers. The scientific development of knowledge about teaching, by carefully trained experts who specialize in research, would enable educators to improve teaching and learning.

In the field of social studies teacher education, as in teacher education generally, university research has concentrated on using the experimental and quasi-experimental methodologies that had come to be viewed as the scientific, objective way to conduct research about human institutions and interactions. Such research would focus on one or more treatments or innovations and their effects on preservice or inservice teachers' skills. Rather than resulting in the improved teaching of social studies, however, this research has largely resulted in an array of unrelated studies that provide little systematic guidance to those engaged in social studies teacher education (Adler 1991a).

Dissatisfaction with the knowledge base produced through carefully designed and controlled research is not confined to social studies. Practitioners often argue that teacher education is too theoretical, too distant from the real world of classrooms. Consistently, it is the student teaching experience, not the findings of researchers, that has been seen by practitioners as the most important, perhaps even the only important, element of preservice education.

Learning by experience, however, does not guarantee that teachers will learn how to teach

well. As Dewey (1938) noted, experience is essential to real learning but experience itself can be miseducative. Theory and knowledge about learning, schooling, and teaching gained through research can and should inform practice. The challenge for teacher education has been to bring together theory and practice, the worlds of research and practice. The charge to teacher educators is that of enabling teachers to bring appropriate knowledge and experience to bear on their classroom practice.

The notion of the teacher as a reflective practitioner has provided a framework for teacher educators to think about the connections of theory and practice. Teacher education rooted in the concept of reflective practice views the teacher as a decisionmaker whose professional judgment must be brought to bear upon the teaching situation in a myriad of ways (Petrie 1992). To be a reflective practitioner is to make sense of one's professional thinking and actions. It means thoughtfully using knowledge that comes from research; and it also means developing knowledge from practice. Teacher education, in this context, involves preparing teachers to develop and use their professional judgment in the decisionmaking demanded in the day-to-day practice of teaching.

A Diversity of Meanings[1]

Although the rhetoric of reflective practice has permeated the teacher education literature in recent years, this apparent consensus masks the diversity of meanings attributed to this notion. Advocates of reflective practice are often talking about very different things, focusing on different purposes for reflection and different sources of knowledge to undergird reflection. A review of the teacher education literature on educating the reflective practitioner reveals at least three different perspectives toward reflection (Adler 1991b).

Reflecting on the Technical and Practical

Some advocates of reflective inquiry focus on teachers' choices of teaching strategies; the content, context, and goals of teaching remain unexamined. Donald Cruikshank's reflective teaching model is an example of this orientation. Cruikshank (1987) intended his model to help preservice and inservice teachers become reflective through structured laboratory experiences in which a designated "teacher" teaches a predetermined, "content-free," lesson to a small group of his or her peers. The designated teacher assesses the extent to which the learners have learned and, through discussions with the small group and in larger groups, considers the effectiveness of his or her teaching.

Reflection, in the Cruikshank model, is instrumental to enabling preservice teachers to replicate teaching behaviors that empirical research has deemed effective (Grimmett 1988). Teachers then use propositional knowledge derived from the research literature for applying and analyzing practice. Reflection is based upon learner achievement; that is, did the learners in the session achieve the goals set for the lesson? Feedback from teaching incidents should provide each preservice teacher with information needed to hone his or her developing skills.

This model does not raise questions of appropriate ends, and objectives are the givens of a teaching situation. Cruikshank (1987) describes "reflective teaching" as an opportunity to apply principles and theories of teaching and learning, developed through scientific inquiry, to real situations. As a result, reflection is likely to be based upon commonsensical inquiry as well as provide the opportunity to apply theory to practice.

Reflection in Action

Donald Schön of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1983, 1987) presents another influential model of the reflective practitioner. Schön describes the reflective practitioner as one who can think while acting and thus can respond to the uncertainty, uniqueness, and conflict involved in the situations in which professionals practice. The central constructs in Schön's conception of reflection are "knowledge in action," "tacit knowledge," and "reflection in action." *Knowledge-in-action* is

the knowledge of practice developed by the experienced, skilled professional. Such knowledge is generally *tacit*: "We reveal it by our spontaneous, skillful application of the performance; and we are characteristically unable to make it verbally explicit" (Schön 1987, 25). Through observation and reflection, however, one can come to describe this knowledge. Knowledge-in-action is constructed, or reconstructed, from practice; furthermore, it is dynamic and situational, not easily reduced to rules and procedures.

Reflection-in-action goes one step further. Through observation and reflection, practitioners can make this knowledge explicit and use it for thinking while "in the thick of things," or, in other words, such knowledge can be used for "thinking on one's feet." The ability to recognize problematic issues, to "name" the things that will be attended to, and to "frame" the context in which we will attend to them is crucial to reflection-in-action (Schön 1983, 40). Problem setting, as Schön labels this process, thus becomes central to reflection.

Educating the reflective practitioner, then, must emphasize learning by doing and coaching. To accomplish this, Schön proposes the reflective practicum in which dialogue among students and between coach and students is fostered in order to promote proficiency in reflection-in-action. In the practicum, students are involved in experiences that simulate practice, but with the pressures, distractions, and risks of the real world removed (Schön 1987, 37). Through this practicum, students should learn to recognize good practice, to build images of competence, and to think while acting. Professional knowledge, in the sense of knowledge developed through research, is secondary; students learn by doing under the tutelage of experienced practitioners (Schön 1987, 16).

Within this model of reflective practice, the knowledge base of reflection results primarily from the practice of experienced experts and, most importantly, from one's own practice, under the guidance of an experienced practitioner. Much like the Cruikshank model, laboratory experience is crucial to this image of reflection; the practicum provides the opportunity to act, albeit in a relatively risk-free environment.

Schön's model takes the teaching context as well as teaching practice as its focus. It does not necessarily, as Schön describes it, question curriculum content or goals. The model of inquiry described by Schön stresses practitioner knowledge or knowledge-in-action, not necessarily the analytic application of, for example, social science knowledge.

Reflection as Critical Inquiry

The work of Kenneth Zeichner (see, for example, Zeichner 1981; Zeichner and Liston 1987) represents a third perspective toward reflective teacher education. Zeichner does not dismiss technical proficiency nor the need to respond to the specific situations of practice; he does, however, see a need to go beyond technique and immediate situations. Zeichner and Liston (1987) posit three levels of reflection. The first is the technical. At this level, the emphasis is on the efficient application of professional knowledge to given ends; goals and objectives are not a subject for scrutiny, nor are long-range consequences. Teachers and prospective teachers need to learn to reflect upon the effectiveness of their teaching strategies: have the learners achieved the given set objectives?

A second level places teaching within its situational and institutional contexts. Teachers are expected to be able to reflect upon why they make certain choices of practice. How do institutional, social, and historical factors constrain and influence these choices? What hidden curricula may be embedded in their practices or in the norms of the institution? This level of reflection goes beyond questions of proficiency at achieving particular ends toward a thoughtful examination of how contexts influence teaching and learning.

A third level of reflection introduces moral and ethical issues. Concerns for justice and equity guide thinking about teaching and learning at this level. Reflection at this level asks that teachers become, in Henry Giroux's (1988) terms, "transformative intellectuals," who are capable of ex-

amining the ways in which schooling generally, and one's own teaching specifically, contribute or fail to contribute to a just and humane society. It is expected that in reflection, teachers would be able to transcend everyday experience, to imagine things as they ought to be, not simply accept things as they are. It is expected that such images would shape teachers' practice and their thinking about their practice.

Critical inquiry, as Zeichner and others see it, involves questioning that which is otherwise taken for granted. It involves looking for unarticulated assumptions and seeing from new perspectives. The focus of reflection from this perspective moves beyond the immediate situation to incorporate awareness of ethical and political possibilities. This involves developing the ability to make decisions about teaching and learning based upon perceived ethical and political consequences and an awareness of alternatives. The pedagogy used to promote critical inquiry must be designed to encourage students to question, analyze, and consider alternatives within an ethical, political framework and to reflect on (and in) that action.

This model of the reflective practitioner acknowledges the importance of developing skills within existing contexts. But the focus for reflection moves beyond proficiency and skill in teaching. The reflective practitioner should also think critically about those contexts and their effects upon the human beings who function within them. The arena of reflection includes curriculum goals as well. Given goals and objectives are themselves open to question, and students are encouraged to consider their purposes within broad cultural contexts as well as classroom contexts. They are to consider the ethical and political consequences of curriculum and of pedagogical practices and, in doing so, to consider the cultural and historical contexts in which schools, and they as teachers and learners, exist.

Comparing and Contrasting the Models

These three models hold several assumptions in common. Each conceives of teaching as a complex activity, a process that is not highly predictable. Each contains the image of teachers as practitioners who must make informed, thoughtful decisions. Thus each is concerned with the problem of developing in teachers the ability to perceive and respond to particular contexts and situations in ways that will facilitate the development of informed judgment and skilled teaching. Despite these similarities, however, these models contain important differences.

The Cruikshank and Schön models of reflection are extensions of the technical, instrumental approaches to teacher education described earlier. In these models, the emphasis is on doing the job effectively, and reflection is focused on one's technical practice. Cruickshank emphasizes the application of research, or propositional knowledge, in the development of teaching skills. Schön looks to practitioners and experience as the source of professional knowledge rather than knowledge produced by research, that is, by those who are *not* practitioners. In both models, however, the implementation of curriculum, not the goals within the curriculum nor the school structure itself, is the focus of reflection. The image of the reflective practitioner, as it is conveyed by Cruikshank and by Schön, continues to be utilitarian—how might particular teaching goals best be reached?

The image of reflection projected in the third level of the Zeichner model, on the other hand, projects a more transformative role for the teacher. Curriculum goals, school structures, and the structures of society may be called into question. It is this widened arena of reflection and the importance of ethical, as well as technical, criteria for the evaluation of teaching that distinguish this third approach from the other two.

Strategies for Reflective Teacher Education

All three levels of reflective inquiry described above have a place in teacher education programs. Although preservice teachers are most focused at the technical and practical levels, there is no evidence to suggest that teachers must master these levels before they can confront moral and ethical issues. The goal of reflective teacher education is to enable beginning teachers to see how these various levels intertwine and how the decisions made in teaching situations involve issues of each type. The literature in teacher education describes a variety of strategies aimed to help teachers improve their reflective behavior.

Most strategies described as promoting reflective inquiry involve enabling the preservice teacher to think out loud, in written or oral form, and to get feedback from others. Expressing previously unstated assumptions allows the teacher to confront his or her own beliefs and ideas. Feedback from others provides a challenge to explore further one's assumptions. In the Cruikshank model, students are involved in teaching seminars with their peers; together, the group will debrief one another's efforts at teaching. In Schön's (1987, 37) model the "reflective practicum" plays a key role. In this practicum, students are involved in experiences that simulate practice, but with the pressures, distractions, and risks of the real world removed. Students learn to recognize good practice, to build images of competence, and to think in the midst of acting. Students are to learn by doing under the tutelage of experienced practitioners (Schön 1987, 16).

Many of the strategies described in the teacher education literature are designed to move prospective teachers toward critical inquiry, toward reflection on moral and ethical as well as practical and technical concerns. Smyth (1989), for example, discusses the importance of helping teachers and prospective teachers develop a "sense of agency," a sense that they can become challengers who take initiative. To do this, Smyth argues that teacher educators must find ways to allow students to focus on everyday concerns while distancing themselves from and reassessing routine practices in schools. He suggests a four-stage activity that would involve first having students write a narrative of a confusing, perplexing situation. The teacher would then help the students to uncover their implicit theories and begin to understand why they operate as they do. From there, the teacher would prompt students to confront their operational theories, to call them into question by locating them in the broad social, cultural, and political contexts. Finally, teachers would ask students to reevaluate assumed notions and constructed mythologies. The fourth stage is one of reconstructing, considering alternative actions and how they might be undertaken.

Advocates of critical inquiry in teacher education also promote writing autobiographies and keeping journals as ways of examining one's previously unexamined assumptions. Grumet (1989) argues that students' autobiographies can help them move back and forth between their experiences and the information they are learning. In addition, it helps them consider how personal stories differ and why, to see that they are multiple stories, and to understand why they exist, to question the unexamined in their lives.

Gitlin and Teitlebaum (1983) suggest using ethnography to help preservice teachers reflect upon schooling practices. The authors argue that encouraging students to observe school practices systematically, to step back from their observations and use relevant knowledge to understand what they have observed, and to present these conclusions in a coherent form helps them to become aware of the influences of hidden curriculum, to examine the limits on schooling practice, and to make judgments, using ethical criteria, on the legitimacy of those practices.

Professors can conduct methods classes in a way that enables preservice teachers to focus on both broad issues and technical competencies. Adler and Goodman (1986) describe strategies used in a social studies methods class to help students develop skills of critical inquiry. Early in the semester, the professor asks students to reexamine

their schooling experiences; then the professor asks them to consider what social studies ought to be. Through interviews, textbook analyses, and school observations, they are to describe social studies as it presently exists in schools and then compare that to the imagined images developed earlier. Finally, students synthesize their personal knowledge with ideas gathered from other class members and readings. During the second segment of the class, students are taught a critical approach to designing curriculum.

Goodman's work (1986) expands on the strategy of taking a critical approach to curriculum development. He encourages prospective teachers to see themselves as creators of curriculum. In choosing a topic on which to write curriculum, students are asked to consider what is important for learners and why some things matter more than others. Students are expected to explore diverse resources, to move beyond the textbook as the primary teaching tool, and to find innovative ways to discover what learners are learning. Students are encouraged to develop strategies in which learners will be expected to use imagination, speculation, intuition, and analysis. Taking a critical approach to curriculum development requires students to engage in a critical discourse. Preservice teachers are expected to examine taken-for-granted assumptions about the nature of knowledge and curriculum as they engage in the planning process (Ross and Hannay 1986). Through this process, prospective teachers are encouraged to see themselves and their own students as the creators of curriculum and to rely less on the curriculum of outside experts.

Adler (1991c) presents the strategy of using imaginative literature in teacher education programs generally and the social studies methods class specifically. She argues that teachers can use imaginative literature to engage the students in inquiry into the nature of social studies, of teaching social studies, and into their personal knowledge and assumptions about social studies-related subjects. For example, students reading Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart (1959)* can gain a new perspective on an African culture before European colonization and on preindustrial cultures generally. The novel presents an opportunity for students to compare this portrayal of preindustrial life with stereotypes about Africa and about traditional societies. By doing so in a narrative, rather than expository style, fiction introduces preservice teachers to another way of seeing the people who inhabit textbooks. Viewing social studies subjects through an alternative set of lenses helps prospective teachers to think broadly about teaching resources and to see the barriers between disciplines as permeable. It also encourages them to question their assumptions about knowledge, curriculum, and teaching.

Field experiences and supervision provide an important opportunity to promote reflection among preservice teachers. In their description of the University of Wisconsin student teaching experience for elementary school preservice teachers, Zeichner and Liston (1987) delineate several strategies used to promote critical reflection. They expect student teachers to assume an active role in curriculum development, not simply to implement ideas and aims developed by others. Each is required to do a project that will involve him or her in inquiry: action-research, ethnography, or curriculum analysis. In addition, they expect each student to keep a journal which is to serve as a vehicle for reflective analysis. Supervisory conferences following observations of each student teacher provide opportunities for supervisors to relate the general issues discussed in seminars, such as hidden curriculum, the institutional contexts of teaching, and the nature of curriculum goals, to the particular experiences of the student teachers. In all of these activities, they expect students to consider latent and long-range effects of schooling practices and to examine their assumptions and socialization (Zeichner 1981).

Similarly, Gitlin (1984) highlights the potential importance of the role of the supervisor in helping the student teacher to reflect. Rather than

focusing simply or solely on observed behavior, the supervisor can serve to help clarify the relationships between the student teacher's short-term and long-term intentions and observed practice. In addition, the supervisor can help the student teacher think through and evaluate the short and long term intents which guide teaching.

Reflective Teacher Education and the Social Studies

The concept of reflective teacher education as critical inquiry is compatible with the goals of social studies teaching and learning. Educators see the social studies as something more than the acquisition of facts and information. Enabling learners to use and apply information is a key goal. Social studies as a field aims to involve learners in decisionmaking and problem-solving about complex social issues, past and present. Preservice teachers who experience the strategies of reflective teacher education are experiencing a model for the reflective inquiry of K-12 learners. Such experiences can enable teachers to develop images of what classroom inquiry is, as well as what it is like to experience such inquiry from the perspective of the learner.

It may be that as the model and practices of teacher education as critical inquiry are refined and developed, beginning social studies teachers will be able to conceptualize and put into practice social studies teaching that is consistent with the stated goals of the field. We need additional research, by both teachers and teacher educators, to examine the effects of participating in a teacher education program with a critical inquiry orientation on the practices of teaching social studies in the classroom.

Note

[1] This chapter draws heavily on a previously published article: Susan A. Adler, "The Reflective Practitioner and the Curriculum of Teacher Education," *Journal of Education for Teaching 17*, no. 2 (1991): 159–170.

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Chapter Eight

Why Teacher Research?

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In a graduate course in educational research we were discussing the use of learning style inventories to better understand our students. The professor said that research had shown these inventories to have little validity and even less reliability. I challenged his claim, describing how I had taken a number of different inventories over the years, used them with students and teachers, and found a great deal of consistency in the results. The professor paused a moment, then looked at me and facetiously said, "Now that's a data point of one." Knowledge from my personal experience had no legitimacy in his eyes.

Throughout my schooling I have been taught that knowledge is something that exists outside of me and that I am to be a consumer of knowledge rather than its creator. Knowledge, I was taught, resides in books and educational materials or in words spoken by teachers. When I began my teacher education, I was taught that experts had studied the science of teaching and that my role was to apply the appropriate strategies at the appropriate times and learning would occur. I was taught that there was a logical separation between theory and practice, that is, the conception of my work was disconnected from my actual practice. I tried to act on these ideas for many years and now reflect back in dismay at the messages I sent to my students about the creation and use of knowledge. No wonder my students and the students of countless others, trained in the same fashion, fail to see that many issues they face in their daily lives are problematic situations that call for individual, context-based responses. Instead, like myself, they rely on the experts to tell them what to do and how to do it and find the advice is many times not relevant to their situation.

I have come to realize that in reality I rarely implemented the ideas and programs of the experts as specified (although until recently I have been reluctant to admit it). Instead, I modified and changed curriculum based on my personal theories about teaching and reflection on my practice. I was creating knowledge about teaching and engaging in an unsystematic attempt at teacher research, as I gathered evidence and made judgments about my own practice.[1] My struggle resulted not from a lack of knowledge, but from devaluation of my personal professional knowledge. My own preservice and inservice education taught me that the role of knowledge creator was for the experts who base their findings on many data points and not a data point of one.

Reflecting upon my years of experience in the classroom as well as my experience in the educational research course described above, I have identified two assumptions that shape my approach to teaching. First, all teachers are learners. Second, in addition to being dispensers of knowledge, teachers create and revise knowledge about their practice as they continue to teach. These assumptions are central to the ideas described in this chapter.

A Search for Voice

The findings generated by research are traditionally considered to be the knowledge base of teaching (see, for example, Shaver 1991 and Good 1990). Generalizations about what makes one an effective teacher are made on the basis of multiple individual studies, which are snapshots taken at one moment in time and do not reflect the holistic view of life in the classroom that teachers experience daily. What we find in this scholarly literature on teaching is observed experience as opposed to lived experience. Although teachers in their daily work are constantly creating knowledge about teaching and learning, we rarely find

the voices of teachers in the scholarly literature. Knowledge generated from classroom practice, however, is a rich source that we can use to inform individual teachers' practice as well as contribute to the general knowledge base on learning and teaching.

What counts as legitimate knowledge about teaching needs to be more broadly based than is currently the case. In searching the relevant literature on the issue, I found that most of the material on reflective practice is being written by university professors. Although this literature is informative, it is noteworthy that teachers' voices are rarely found in this literature. After all, who should know more about reflective practice than the practitioners themselves. A growing body of useful and informative literature has been written by practitioners and research workers collaborating with teachers (see the chapters by Berkowitz, Crook, Nehring, and Cornett et al. in this volume, as well as Goswami and Stillman 1987; Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1990; Strickland 1988).

Richert (1992) notes that expertise in teaching has traditionally been located outside the teacher. To change this situation, teachers must develop their voices about teaching—what Richert (1992, 190) calls "speaking one's truth." That is, teachers who talk about what they do and why are able to know what they do and why and to question themselves as well. The process of reflection in which teachers think about their work in order to question its purpose, examine its consequences, and therefore learn about it involves talking or a conversation of some sort.

The conversations necessary for the development of teachers' voices, however, are inhibited by school culture and organization that create conditions for teachers such as low status, overwork, and externally defined standards of performance (Richert 1992; Ross 1992b; Smyth 1992). Teacher learning and construction of knowledge about teaching, however, hinge on the development of a conversation among teachers as well as between practitioners and university researchers. In this chapter, I explore some issues that inhibit the development of conversations between practitioners and university researchers about teaching and present one activity that can contribute to overcoming these obstacles—teacher research.

Knowledge Base for Teaching: Practitioners' Knowledge Versus Researchers' Knowledge

The absence of teacher voices in what is considered the knowledge base for teaching raises a number of important questions. What is research and who defines it as such? Why is it that teacher knowledge, created in the context of the classroom by practitioners, is devalued and ignored in the literature? Can teachers carry out research in their classrooms in such a systematic way that the findings can be useful to the profession and add to the general knowledge base on teaching? What is the unique set of circumstances that teacher researchers need to consider in their practice? What are the costs and benefits to teachers, students, and the teaching profession of this research? Teachers desire new knowledge that they can use to inform and improve practice. Often, knowledge that traditional, formal research creates is not considered of much practical use and as a result is ignored. Why is it that teachers seeking useful knowledge and educational researchers seeking to improve the knowledge base of teaching do not complement each other?

Bolster (1983) suggests that teachers and research scholars use different sets of assumptions in thinking about teaching. Teachers' knowledge about teaching is context-based: the product of experience in particular classrooms with particular groups of students. Teaching is a process involving situational decision-making, that is, dealing with continuous problematic situations. Much of what takes place in the classroom is the result of tacit understandings among the participants. Teachers most often view the classroom in a holistic fashion in which single events could have multiple causes and multiple meanings.

This view of teaching contrasts with the perspective of traditional research designs that typically view teaching from a mainstream social

science perspective. From this perspective, derived from the formal disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology), knowledge is acquired through the use of research methods that are sanctioned by colleagues in the field. Traditional research scholars are trained to look for regular patterns of observable events that allow for prediction, generalization, and universal explanations. Each event is usually reduced to a single cause and single meaning. In teacher-effectiveness research, for example, the teacher is viewed as the cause of student learning, and the interaction among participants in the classroom is disregarded (Ross, Cornett, and McCutcheon 1992).

The perspectives of the traditional research scholar and the perspectives of their subjects (teachers and students) are different. For research findings to be useful for teachers in daily practice, the research scholar must take into account the characteristics of teachers' knowledge about teaching. Because of the context-based, interactional nature of this knowledge creation process, teachers are in a unique position to supply the missing understandings that teachers can use to inform their practice.

We need to remind ourselves constantly that the knowledge generated from research is socially constructed knowledge (see Berger and Luckmann 1966), and as such we can deconstruct and reconstruct it in ways that make sense for the users of that knowledge. Questions of knowledge are really questions of control and power. As social studies educators, we are in a unique position to help uncover and understand the historical, social, economic, and cultural circumstances that have led to current conceptions of the legitimate knowledge base for teaching. We can help to discover and, in the words of Anne Berthoff (1987), "RE-search," reinterpret, and reevaluate the nature of knowledge about teaching. These questions are about who creates knowledge, for what purposes, as well as how knowledge is legitimized and what criteria should be used to judge its usefulness. The teacher researcher movement holds the potential to assist teachers and students in regaining control over the direction of and use of the knowledge they create in the classroom.

Teacher Research

Teacher research is one way in which teachers can gain more control over their work and amplify their voices in the formal knowledge base for teaching. Teacher research also provides a way for teachers' personal practical theories and practice-generated knowledge to be systematically examined. This in turn enhances professional development and can contribute to improved classroom practice.

The roots of the notion of teacher research can be traced to the work of three people: Lawrence Stenhouse's (1975) notion of the extended professional; Donald Schön's (1983) concept of the reflective practitioner; and Kurt Lewin's (1951) work in action research. All of these are extensions of ideas generated by John Dewey on democracy and education (Archambault 1964). Perhaps the clearest definition of teacher research is the one developed by Cochran-Smith and Lytle, who define teacher research as "systematic, intentional inquiry by teachers" (1990, 2). Jean Rudduck (1985, 282) argues that teacher research should inform practice and be geared toward and shared with practitioners. She argues that what has counted as research in the past is too narrowly defined and has resulted in potential researchers being disenfranchised. "One important potential of the [teacher research] movement," she says, is "the opening up of the established research tradition and the democratization of the research community."

Teacher research is "a new genre not necessarily bound by the constraints of traditional research paradigms" (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1990, 4). Some research scholars are beginning to share their ideas about the steps that have worked for them and others (Goswami and Stillman 1987; Strickland 1988; Nixon 1989). Although some variation can be found in the steps used in the teacher research process, most appear to include the following:

- an issue or question derived from a felt need, dissonance, or dilemma based on a classroom experience(s);
- a plan or design through which the issue can be studied in the natural classroom environment;
- implementation of the plan or carrying out of the inquiry;
- observation of the plan in action and the collection of data as a participant observer;
- reflection on what has been learned, individually or collaboratively;
- revised plan for action. Cycle repeats.

As teachers, we need to formulate questions and pose research problems that are of interest to us and to our practice. The questions that we ask as teachers are different from the questions asked by other researchers: teachers' questions are contextually based and designed to inform practice. Although these questions are often asked initially from a technical perspective, the implications of these questions run much deeper. We pose these types of questions every day and collect data on them without thinking about their connection to research. Among other topics, questions used as starting points can involve individual students, such as:

- Why doesn't Rachel do written assignments in class?
- How can we help Juan make connections between his prior learning and new material?

or involve classrooms, such as:

- How can we get students in this class to write about topics of interest to them?
- How will I know when my students understand a concept and are ready to move on to something new?

or involve school policies and practices, such as:

- How can we rearrange the schedule so that all fifth grade teachers are free at the same time?
- How can classes be reorganized in this school in order to facilitate interdisciplinary teaching?

From these beginning questions, teachers develop more focused questions that become the first step in a research process that follows procedures similar to those outlined above. Because of the nature of teacher research, the data collection methods available are more closely aligned with the qualitative research tradition. The use of journal writing, participant-observation, and audio- and videotaping are just a few of the data collection methods that are readily available to the classroom teacher. Involving other teachers and our students in the data collection process makes teaching and learning a collaborative enterprise of inquiry where the school is viewed as a laboratory (Kincheloe 1991).

Teachers should reflect upon findings in such a way as to improve practice. That reflection can be done individually and collectively. In places where formal opportunities for support of teacher research do not exist or are inadequate, teachers are leading the way in developing informal support systems. Teachers are creating new forums for disseminating and sharing knowledge that reflect the needs of teacher research groups such as the Philadelphia Teachers' Learning Cooperative and the Boston Women's Teachers' Group (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1990). These two groups are examples of teachers working outside the traditional school structure to provide support and collaboration for teacher inquiry. One of the best ways to disseminate such research findings is through the writing and exchanging of case studies. Journals such as *Democracy and Education*, *Radical Teacher*, *Rethinking Schools*, and *Social Science Record* provide outlets for teachers writing about reflections on practice as well as case studies of their teaching. Case studies when used in teacher training institutions have shown positive results (Nixon 1989).

Real and Perceived Barriers to Teacher Research

Many barriers and obstacles hinder teacher research, but they are not prohibitive. These barriers include: 1) questions of the legitimacy of practice-generated knowledge about teaching,

2) institutional barriers, and 3) access to and dissemination of knowledge, both in terms of using previous research as well as disseminating the results of teacher research.

Legitimacy of Practice-Generated Knowledge

Some argue that teacher research should be held to the same methodological rigors of all research, and to do anything less would be condescending. Others argue that teacher research is a unique and different kind of research and, as such, is not subject to the same forms as traditional research. Others argue that teacher research is not really research at all. Where you stand on this issue probably depends on how you define "research" and your philosophical position on knowledge and knowledge creation.

The critics of teacher research have raised important issues that call for a response from teachers undertaking research and those in a position to support teacher research. Applebee (1987) argues that teacher participation in the research process is important, but that teachers cannot be expected to be research scholars. This type of participation, however, has traditionally resulted in gaining the cooperation of teachers, but having university research scholars formulate the questions and control the research process from inception to completion. This relationship has evolved from traditionally unequal power relationships between research designers and their subjects—teachers. Applebee (1987, 7) argues that teachers and research scholars have different types of expertise, and that teachers' knowledge is generated out of and through practice and that "educational research should not be justified by expectations for immediate reform of practice." If the research results are not used to inform practice, then teachers view them skeptically and as incompatible with their needs. They will seek to conduct research from perspectives more closely aligned with their need to inform practice.

In expressing this viewpoint, Applebee uses traditional definitions of social science research as his starting point. In many respects these traditional definitions of research define what counts as legitimate knowledge and as a result discount and devalue the knowledge created by teachers in the practice of their profession. Traditional perspectives on scientific research and the use of research knowledge to increase the technical control of teaching practice further diminish practice-generated knowledge about teaching. Increasing the legitimacy of teacher knowledge, then, involves restructuring the power relations in the process of producing knowledge about teaching, so that we close the falsely conceived separation between theory and practice found in traditional social science research. When teachers approach classroom situations as problematic; examine the personal practical theories that support the ways in which they might respond to classroom situations; collect data on the interactions that take place; and then reflect on the experience in such a way as to reshape and redefine their theories before beginning the process again—then they are engaging in a form of research.

Peeke (1984) discusses teacher researcher conflicts as those concerned with "cost, affinity, and time." By affinity, Peeke means that teachers feel conflict because they are unable to distance themselves from and take the "proper role" vis-à-vis the students in the research process. But what is the proper role for teachers and who defines it? The role of the teacher as research scholar is different from the role of those engaged in traditional research. The teacher as research scholar sends students a different message about what knowledge is and how it is generated. Students and teachers engage collectively in the research process.

Social studies has a strong tradition of this type of collective inquiry in the knowledge-creating process. For example, the Foxfire movement in the Appalachians (Wigginton 1977) and the Salt movement on the coast of Maine (Wood 1977) are models of teachers and students as knowledge creators.

As teachers, we must be aware of the historical context in which knowledge is constructed, by whom it is constructed, and for what purposes.

In this process we must reexamine previous assumptions about the roles and work of teachers. We have spent most of our professional lives in one type of relationship regarding knowledge and its creation. We must work through these conflicts when changing our role about the knowledge we are using in our classrooms (Nixon 1989; Queenan 1988). Because of the isolation of individual practice from a community of teachers, teachers often have fears of exposing themselves as weak, incompetent, unthinking (Nixon 1989). We must continue the struggle to overcome these feelings by becoming members of critically reflective communities of scholars.[2]

Institutional Barriers

The culture and organization of schools do not encourage collaboration among teachers or reflection upon dilemmas of practice (Lortie 1975; Ross 1993). Institutional barriers to conducting teacher research include the isolated nature of teachers' work, limited time, workloads, and the increased state mandates for accountability. For teachers to engage in research as part of their professional development, flexibility in scheduling, workloads, and release time can only make new arrangements possible. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, many of which call for teachers to organize and implement those changes within their power and to become advocates for those that are not. Cornett (1991) argues that empowerment is not something that someone else can give you. It is, according to Richert (1992, 196–197), earned through a collective struggle:

> As teachers talk about their work and "name" their experiences, they learn about what they know and what they believe. They also learn what they do not know. Such knowledge empowers the individual by providing a source for action that is generated from within rather than imposed from without. In Dewey's terms, teachers who know in this way can act with intent; they are empowered to draw from the center of their own knowing and act as critics and creators of their world rather than solely respondents to it, or worse, victims of it. Agency . . . casts voice as the connection between reflection and action. Power is thus linked with agency or intentionality. People who are empowered . . . are those who are able to act in accordance with what they know and believe.

A number of formal groups are engaged in this type of collaborative effort, such as the Philadelphia Teachers' Learning Collaborative (see Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1990) that meets in private homes and reflects on classroom practices. Another example is the Boston Women's Teachers' group, which examines the effects of teaching on teachers and publishes a journal.

Teachers must demonstrate to those in positions of power the benefits to the profession and to the student population of new institutional arrangements. The benefits of teacher research to teachers and students are well documented (Rudduck 1985; Queenan 1988; Kincheloe 1991; Goswami and Stillman 1987). These include an increased sense of professionalism, the intellectualizing of and control over their work, and the modeling how to learn and the ability to reflect critically on their own teaching. Students benefit also because their needs become the focus of teachers and through the development of a community of learners with teachers, they gain increased ownership of their work.

Much of the research in universities is funded by grants from government sources, foundations, and corporations. These grants could be opened up to teacher researchers to offset costs that local districts can not afford to underwrite. What is more important, teachers must pursue these grants and justify receiving them. If some of the money currently being allocated for university research were reallocated to teachers, it could make a monumental difference in terms of supporting teacher research efforts. For example, in the language arts, from which most of the teacher research literature is coming (Strickland 1988), the Research Foundation of the National Council of Teachers of English

sponsors a special grant program for teachers conducting research in their classrooms.

Access to and Dissemination of Knowledge

The third barrier to teacher research—access to and dissemination of information—should be the easiest to handle, although some aspects of the problem are so entrenched that change will not be easy. Access to the current research and literature that can further assist teachers in developing a theoretical base for their research and can assist them in building upon previous knowledge is already undergoing fundamental changes. Historically, research universities served an important function by housing vast collections that could be stored in one location and made accessible for research. Now the technology exists for a large number of people in a variety of locations to gain easy access to that research literature. Universities and university libraries should continue to link electronically with school and local libraries to make available a vast array of materials that were once accessible to only a few.

If access to materials becomes widely available, then professional journals will be more likely to publish teacher research along with other research. Today a hierarchy of journals exists that, in many respects, reflects the hierarchy about what counts as legitimate knowledge (e.g., scholarly versus practice-generated). As more and more of us see this hierarchy as socially constructed for a purpose that no longer makes sense, then new arrangements will be formed.

At one point the publishing of research results was in the hands of the few, and access was very limited. With the advent of desktop publishing, however, the dissemination of information is itself already becoming much more democratic. Although formidable constraints and barriers still exist, many of them are diminishing, and opportunities for new types of relationships are emerging. Teachers need to take the initiative and seize the power made available by these new opportunities for information-sharing and dissemination.

A Role for Teacher Education

Teacher education programs can help teachers develop the attitudes and skills necessary to conduct research in their classrooms (see Adler's chapter in this volume, which focuses on reflective practice in teacher education). Traditionally, teacher education programs have operated from a perspective of technical rationality. The intent in these programs has been to teach the generic skills and competencies that research has shown to be associated with desirable pupil outcomes and the image of good teaching, excluding any form of reflection. Many reasons lie behind this phenomenon, including the fact that most beginning teachers want a survival course in how to teach, rather than a course that presents schooling and teaching as problematic areas that require an investigative approach. In addition, many practicing educators have little regard for educational research and want new teachers trained in the ways of the schools upon arrival. This tendency provides new teachers as well as established teachers little opportunity to question the underlying assumptions behind their practices or to reflect upon them in order to produce change. In many respects, teacher education programs have been designed to reproduce the status quo in our schools.

Change in the perception of the utility of research is possible and is being undertaken on many levels. The growing collaboration of university professors with classroom teachers in action research projects is promising. Action research can provide inservice teachers with a new perspective on research and the value of research findings, a process which fosters an experimental attitude toward practice and helps teachers initiate and sustain ongoing inquiries in their classrooms (Zeichner 1992).

Recently, a number of colleges and universities across the country have adopted reflection as the conceptual orientation for their teacher education programs (see Valli 1992 for case studies of seven such programs). In these programs the relationship between theory and practice is problematized.[3]

> The reflective question is not "Did I employ such and such aspect of research," but "Is that theory or finding relevant to this situation and do I accept the value assumptions implicit in that strand of research?" Distinction is made between research findings—the way things work in general—and practice—uniqueness of each classroom event. (Valli 1992, 218)

Case studies of reflective teacher education illustrate how a reflective orientation to teacher education should address content, processes, and attitudes valued in reflective practice. Valli's taxonomy of approaches to reflective teacher education describes different ways in which knowledge is used to guide practice (Table 1).

Explication and examination of preservice teachers' beliefs and assumptions about teaching is a necessary first step in developing habits of reflection. Throughout the preparatory coursework, faculty need to provide a model of reflective practice in action for their students. The development of cohorts, placing student teachers in cluster sites, and the institution of collaborative supervisory teams all facilitate the development of a community of reflective practitioners and create the possibility for action research projects. Keeping journals and field notes during field experiences can provide preservice teachers with a means of reflection upon their practice and the practice of others. Student teaching seminars that run concurrently with the student teaching experience

Table 1
Levels of Reflective Teacher Preparation

	Level	Quality of Reflection	Content for Reflection
Reflective Practice	6. critical	problematizing the goals and purposes of schooling in light of justice and other ethical criteria	social and political dimensions of schooling
	5. personalistic	hearing one's own voice	personal growth relational issues
	4. deliberative	weighing competing claims and viewpoints	a range of teaching concerns
	3. reflection-in-action	contexualizing claims and viewpoints	personal teaching performance
Technical Rationality	2. technical decision making	matching performance to external guidelines	generic instruction and management behaviors derived from research on teaching
	1. behavioral	not applicable	generic instruction and management behaviors derived from research on teaching*

* *at the behavioral level, this is prescribed, not reflective content*

From: Valli, Linda. Reflective Teacher Education: Cases and Critiques. *Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.*

should incorporate a discussion of the journal observations and findings . These are some of the activities that support reflective practice and help develop the skills and attitudes necessary for teacher research activities (see Ross 1992a).

Finally, the addition of a teacher research component into preservice training programs assists teachers in examining their personal practical theories and in becoming reflective practitioners. Some evidence is available to indicate that those who do research as part of their training have a better attitude toward research findings and are more apt to continue such actions in the future than those who do not (Rudduck 1985). In addition, a course in teacher research should be offered at all universities and colleges training teachers and should be open to both preservice and inservice teachers working with them. If the benefits to individuals and the profession are as pronounced as those beginning to appear in the literature, then teacher research will catch on and become a driving force of its own. Because the more things change, the more things change.

Notes

[1] For readers interested in the use of practical theories and reflective practice, see: Cornett et al. in this volume, and E. Wayne Ross, Jeffrey W. Cornett, and Gail McCutcheon, eds., *Teacher Personal Theorizing: Connecting Curriculum Practice, Theory and Research* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

[2] See Sandra Mathison's chapter in this volume for a further discussion of critically reflective communities of teachers.

[3] The process of uncovering what might otherwise be taken for granted or accepted on face value without critical examination.

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Chapter Nine

Reflective Practice and the Culture of Schools

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"What do we mean when we say that we want a student to adjust to the social context?" asked Lynda, one of seven teachers and two district administrators who are attempting to develop an alternative space within a traditional urban comprehensive high school. "Are we taking into account that we also want students to be independent and assert themselves?" So began a half-day discussion as participants debated and clarified goals for themselves and their students. The discussion concluded with the group having constructed a matrix of behaviors they will look for in students with categories such as inquiry, connecting, empowerment, self esteem, and cooperation. Before the meeting ended they decided to focus their next discussion in three areas: a) to define what they mean by teaching "habits of mind"; b) to work with me as a teacher educator to conceptualize new structures in which teachers, preservice teachers, and university faculty will collaborate to analyze and reform teaching and schooling; and c) to renew their fight to change their school's scheduling practices so that academic periods can be lengthened from forty-five to ninety minutes. These teachers are engaging in questioning what is to be taught, to whom, how, and for what purposes, and in improving their teaching practices through analyzing and transforming the culture of their school.

In this chapter I will argue that collaboration, such as that undertaken by these teachers, is required for reflective teaching. Moreover, I will argue that the culture of schools both constrains and supports these practices and that it shapes how we think and talk about education, how we organize our schools and classrooms, and what we do in these classrooms and schools. Consequently, I will describe the dominant characteristics of the culture of schools and the effects of that culture on social studies teaching. Finally, because we need to remember that cultures are not eternal but rather social constructions, I will build on the work of the high school teachers referred to above as an example of teachers engaging in the reflective practice of transforming school cultures.

School Culture: Discourse, Organizational Structures, and Teaching Practices

We can analyze school culture for how it constrains and sustains what we do as teachers, not because we accept those constraints but because we might change them. The culture of schools is not inevitable but is an outcome of ongoing political, ethical, and philosophical struggles over schooling. Examining the culture of schools requires that we examine the accepted or dominant ways in which we think about and organize our classrooms and schools. This process involves an examination of discourses, practices, and organizational forms within schools for their historical and current interrelationships. What we say or do as teachers does not occur in isolation but exists as part of a larger web in which practices are situated in particular ways of talking about the world, or "discourses." These discourses support and are supported by particular teaching practices and school structures. As Stephen Kemmis and Robin McTaggart state:

> the institutionalization of educational activities in more or less well-formed and characteristic *practices* depends upon the availability of *discourses* which can justify and/or legitimate the practices as educa-

> tionally worthwhile, and upon the existence of stable *organizational forms*. . . . [Emphasis in original] (1988, 42)

For example, tracking or the practice of sorting students into homogeneous groups became the accepted response to the increasingly heterogeneous school population in the early part of this century. The change in school population resulted from increasing immigration from the countries of eastern and southern Europe and the more rigorous enforcement of compulsory attendance laws required by a modern industrial society. Tracking became an accepted organizational response for a variety of reasons, including the rise in the psychological discourse of behaviorism and the political discourse of meritocracy. These ways of talking about psychology and politics legitimized the assumption that individuals were born with predetermined abilities that schools could assess through intelligence tests and the assumption that an individual's ultimate social standing resulted from a combination of ability and effort. Hence, we perceived sorting, tracking, and consequently narrowing students' ultimate places in society as scientific and fair.

Tracking was only one of several responses to the increasing diversity of student populations; other outcomes were and are conceivable. Now, as in the past, some educators have opposed tracking—arguing, among other things, that standardized tests are culturally biased and that tracking unfairly diminishes the life chances of those in the middle and lower tracks. Other approaches are possible, including developing heterogeneous classrooms with less competitive and more cooperative learning as well as greater emphasis on individualistic goals and authentic forms of assessment. Such approaches would require that we change not only our teaching practices but how we structure schools and how we conceptualize and discuss general and specific educational goals.

Therefore, part of becoming a reflective teacher is realizing that we have struggled and continue to struggle over educational goals, school and classroom organization, and curriculum content (Kliebard 1986). Education is a contested terrain in which different outcomes are possible. This interpretation contrasts with how people often come to think about schools. Maxine Greene writes that for many,

> schools seems to resemble natural processes; what happens in them appears to have the sanction of natural law and can no more be questioned or resisted than the law of gravity. (1985, 11)

Furthermore, when change does occur, we often perceive it as an outcome of corrected misperceptions rather than a result of conflicting views of education. As Michael Katz (1987) states, we tend to hold a depoliticized view of education, in which less-than-desirable outcomes, such as racial segregation, are viewed as outcomes of temporary oversights rather than differences in power.

Consequently, becoming a reflective social studies teacher requires that we become aware of our teaching within the context of the discourse, organization, and practices of schooling that restricts what we do as teachers. The aim of reflective practice is not to accept what *is* as inevitable, but to examine and potentially change the assumptions and interests underlying current practices (see Susan Adler's chapter in this volume for a comparison of perspectives on reflective practice).

In the remainder of this chapter, I will describe the culture of teaching as reflected in the discourses, organization, and practices of social studies. Specifically, I will contend that social studies discourse, as represented in textbooks, lessons, and discussions of teaching, tends to present the structure and nature of society and schools as a cooperative system in which social conflict is an aberration. This emphasis on cooperation and consensus promotes teaching practices in which teachers transmit knowledge to students as unassailable facts. Second, I will argue that schools are organized so that teachers are isolated not only from one another but from those who conceptualize the curriculum. Teachers are primarily left to implement social

studies curricula as conceptualized by others. Last, I will provide some examples of how teachers might collaboratively reflect on and transform teaching practices.

The Discourse of Individualism: Individual Choices Within Social Constraints

As implied above in the example of tracking, we can examine language for the role that it plays not only as "an expression of social affairs," as Thomas Popkewitz (1991, 25) writes, "but as one aspect of the mechanisms by which the world is produced and reproduced through the subjective elements of everyday life." Popkewitz continues, "Discourse, the rules and patterns of communication in which language is used, creates distinctions, differences, and categories that define and create the world." In education, particular discourses (such as the discourses that support testing and tracking) become dominant and accepted, therefore limiting *but not determining* our perceptions of the world and what we think and say.

In examining discourse and social studies, we can place social studies within what William Sullivan (1988) describes as the discourse of philosophical liberalism. I will describe below how philosophical liberalism, which emphasizes individual choice within the existing social order, is reflected in social studies texts and teaching. First, the emphasis on individual choice makes it difficult for teachers to develop ethical or political rationales for educational choices and, therefore, they are left with individualistic rationales. Second, social studies textbooks reflect the acceptance of the existing social order. Finally, when we examine the organization of schools, individualism and the acceptance of the existing social order are reflected in the isolation of teachers' work and how their work is conceptualized by others. The discourse and organization of schools promotes teaching practices that emphasize transmitting knowledge about which experts have reached consensus rather than analyzing, evaluating, and developing new knowledge.

Sullivan argues that the language of philosophical liberalism promotes, as naturally occurring, individual choice and competition as well as an instrumental approach to institutional and social relations. Therefore, society and education are viewed as natural phenomena, enduring without multiple interpretations or social conflict, which cannot be substantially changed (1988, 172). Society tends to be reified, that is, viewed as natural rather than as an outcome of human choices.

When society is viewed as natural and not an outcome of human construction or choices, questions about what the aims of education should be are submerged under the goal of providing individuals with the conditions to pursue their goals. In this context, educators determine strategies and techniques to attain goals, but do not participate in developing those goals. Furthermore, because the lack of debate over social goals has discouraged the development of ethical and political discourses that would justify one educational goal over another, teachers are left to justify educational decisions as based on their individual teaching "styles" (Hursh 1988).

The dominant discourse, which presents society as stable and conflict as undesirable, is reflected in social studies textbooks. Popkewitz concludes that social studies textbooks promote functional stability and avoid addressing conflict and its social function. Textbooks also advance the idea that few in the United States are disadvantaged and that those who care can press their claims in elections and through other forms of political participation. Michael Apple (1971, 33), in his review of social studies texts, characterizes them as tending to be silent on criticism and point to the "assumption that conflict, and especially social conflict, is not an essential feature of . . . society." This curricular emphasis on justifying stability and consensus, coupled with teaching methods that emphasize classroom knowledge as given or unproblematic and classroom practices of conforming and following directions, teaches students not to question either what or how they are taught.

The Structure That Divides: Disempowering Teachers and Students

In the section above, we saw how discourse restricts educators' ability to question educational goals and methods. For example, the dominant discourse makes it difficult to debate ethical issues of how schools should be organized and the discourse of texts presents a consensual view of history and society. In examining school structures, we will see how the way in which schools are organized limits teachers' control over what and how they teach and their relationships with colleagues and students.

Teachers are encouraged to focus on the technical rather than the conceptual aspects of their work. Over the last one hundred years, administrative control over teachers has taken several forms. In the early years of public schooling, administrators could directly control teacher's activities. As schools grew larger and direct contact with teachers less feasible, administrative control has emulated the rules and regulations of bureaucratic structure. Currently, teachers experience technical control (Apple 1983).

Technical control limits teachers not through direct orders or bureaucratic rules but through seemingly scientific and rational rules. A good example of technical control is proficiency-based curricula. Linda McNeil (1988b, 478) describes how one school district, in attempting to raise standards, implemented a system of proficiency exams that would "take the choices of curriculum building and the means of testing students away from teachers and place them in the hands of consultants who designed standardized tests."

Consequently, teachers, who had a reputation for knowing their subjects, for conceptualizing and organizing lessons and units, and for being passionate about teaching, were reduced to attempting to cover each day's proficiencies as required by the district. A proficiency-based curriculum promoted teaching and testing for the simplified subject matter and undermined academic quality. All forms of technical control, such as proficiency-based curriculum and standardized testing, transform teaching from a complex professional activity requiring teachers to use a wide range of skills and knowledge to an activity emphasizing technical skills.

Other structural characteristics limit the amount of control that teachers have over what and how they teach. Fred Newmann (1991), in an ongoing major study on social studies and the teaching of higher order thinking skills, identifies several structural reasons why teachers tend to emphasize broad, superficial coverage of the curriculum. First, he echoes the observations of Apple and McNeil, stating that teachers are pressured to align their teaching with state and national assessment instruments, state and local curriculum guidelines, and traditional textbooks.

Second, Newmann's research reinforces an observation made by others (e.g., Lortie 1977) that schools foster a culture of teacher isolation, in which teachers spend almost all of their time with students and an inadequate amount of time with fellow teachers. Joseph Onosko writes in "Barriers to the Promotion of Higher Order Thinking":

> Teachers operate in isolation from one another [which] severely limits their access to the curricular and instructional ideas of colleagues, and shields them from both constructive criticism of and recognition for their instructional practices. (1991, 359)

More importantly, he says, "Such a culture does not encourage or promote collective action even though teachers frequently face similar instructional concerns" (Onosko 1991, 359). The organizational structure of schools, perhaps not surprisingly, undermines the potential for teachers to address their own practices and the discourses of teaching and schooling.

Finally, the structure of schools (which promotes emphasizing broad, superficial knowledge and places teachers in daily contact with large numbers of students) frustrates the possibility for teachers to come to know students and for students to feel that they are more than merely the recipients of an anonymous curriculum. In contrast to teachers' isolation from one another,

teachers are inundated by the daily contact with large numbers of students. Large class sizes have the consequence of increasing teachers' fear of losing control over students. In addition, large total student load decreases the possibility of teachers' using alternative approaches, such as essay exams, because of the amount of time that would be involved. Responsibility for teaching a large number of students in each class encourages an emphasis on traditional transmission approaches to teaching. Consequently, school structures, in which teachers are limited to technical decisions about how to implement educational goals as determined by others and in which students are limited to being recipients of knowledge, has the result of disempowering both teachers and students.

Making Knowledge Inaccessible: Teaching by Mentioning

The above analysis of educational discourse and organization helps explain why it is difficult for teachers to become reflective practitioners. First, the establishment of national, state, and district standardized exams promotes presenting information that is likely to be tested in the form that it will be tested. For example, McNeil's (1988b) study of innovative teachers noted for their ability to promote students' higher order thinking, who were faced with the mandates of a proficiency-based curriculum, revealed how the teachers sometimes resisted but mostly relented to the requirement that they emphasize isolated factual recall in their teaching. Second, teachers parallel the textbook emphasis on breadth rather than depth. Teaching becomes synonymous with telling, and teachers come to adopt the approach of "teaching by mentioning." That is, if they mentioned it, then they can assume they taught it. Third, teachers are able to contribute little to curricular goals and lack support from and knowledge of what other teachers do. They are left with reflecting on and implementing new practices without the support of colleagues. Lastly, some teachers, in order to reduce the risk of students' questioning and debating what they, the students, are taught, simplify knowledge and avoid topics that might be controversial.

In her study on the relationship between the practices of social studies teachers and school organization, McNeil (1988a, 434) concludes that, when teachers perceive constraints on their teaching, constraints that endorse achieving minimum standards rather taking risks, then teachers tend to elicit minimum standards. Teachers aim for minimal standards and compliance from their students by reducing their teaching to lecturing and presenting lists of terms and unelaborated facts. They teach, she writes, "defensively . . . controlling the knowledge in order to control the students." She depicts defensive teaching as having three basic strategies: fragmentation, mystification, and omission.

Fragmentation occurs when teachers reduce their teaching to presenting lists of facts, names, places, events, and so on. By taking such an approach, teachers avoid elaborating on the meaning of the facts and can present the material each year regardless of who they have as students. Furthermore, the making of lists has the effect of conveying the idea that historians have reached consensus on the basic facts, and the teacher, as transmitter, can remain the primary source of course content. Students tacitly accept such teaching methods because they can avoid trying to "understand complex connections among facts and trying to express their understanding in extended writing or in a project" (McNeil 1988a, 435). Finally, students know that they will be required to recall only the information on the list for multiple-choice and other short-answer tests.

When teachers do not oversimplify knowledge, they can mystify or omit it. Teachers tend to mystify knowledge, writes McNeil, when the knowledge is complicated or controversial. McNeil provides examples of teachers' referring briefly to topics such as the Federal Reserve System, capitalism, or the Vietnam War, but implying in their presentations that it is a topic that students should know *about*, but not know. That is, the teachers want to have covered it but avoid discussions that might reveal its complex or controversial nature.

Furthermore, teachers may simply omit topics that they feel are too controversial or complex. McNeil is careful to point out that these practices occur not because teachers are inherently uninterested in good teaching but because teachers control few teaching decisions and perceive few benefits from taking risks.

Becoming a Reflective Social Studies Teacher: Transforming Practices, Discourses, and Organizational Structures

By placing social studies teaching within the culture of schooling, it becomes evident that what we do as teachers does not occur in isolation but as part of an integrated relationship among practices, discourses, and structures. Making more than superficial changes in our practices may be obstructed by structural requirements of standardized tests, performance-based proficiencies, and the discourse of individual styles. Becoming a reflective teacher requires, therefore, collaborating with other teachers and educators in the examination and transformation of practices, discourses, and organizations. Hence, in this concluding section, I will provide some examples of what might be the goals of reflective teaching and how teachers might collaboratively work towards those goals.

Currently, the dominant school culture constrains teachers and students so that they see themselves as consumers rather than producers of knowledge. What counts as knowledge and how it should be taught is constrained by textbook and text developers and characteristic school structures in which teachers, isolated from other teachers, teach too many students for too short periods of time.

Instead, reflective teaching requires that teachers and students see themselves as creators of knowledge, who ask what should be taught, for what purposes, and how does that knowledge relate to the lives of the teachers and students. Teachers and students would be encouraged to develop situations, as Newmann described, that promote students' acquiring, interpreting, analyzing, and applying knowledge in open-ended situations. Students would be encouraged to

> critically appropriate knowledge existing outside their immediate experience in order to broaden their understanding of themselves, the world, and the possibilities for transforming the taken-for-granted assumptions about the way we live. (McLaren 1989, 186)

In making such changes we would begin to raise political and ethical questions about schools and curriculum, such as: What should be the purposes of education? Whose knowledge is reflected in the curriculum? What should be the nature of relationships among students and teachers and between students and the curriculum? Teaching would not be viewed as merely a technical activity, in which teachers are restricted to implementing the goals of others, but viewed as a "reflective, foundational, political act requiring moral judgment and commitment" (Beyer 1988, 308).

The teachers mentioned at the outset of this chapter are engaged in just such a process. Over the last two years these teachers have been collaborating on a project to improve student learning by reforming the curriculum and their teaching practices, developing authentic forms of assessment, and attempting to restructure part of the school as a school-within-a-school. During that time period they have been analyzing and transforming the discourse, practices, and structures of the school.

For example, because almost all of the students in the school are either African-American or Hispanic, the teachers have debated how to conceptualize multicultural education, examining the pros and cons of conceptions ranging from those that emphasize increasing student self-esteem, teaching African and African-American history and culture, or developing connections between students' lives and culture and the school. As the teachers clarify these conceptions, they reflect on how language implicitly endorses particular assumptions about student-teacher relations and the value of the student's own knowledge. They also realize that changing the curriculum to account for students' knowledge and experiences requires additional changes in the school structure and

classroom practices. Therefore, they have developed curricula and alternative assessment practices that acknowledge and build on students' knowledge. They have also undertaken the challenge of reducing the negative effects of tracking by combining special and general education classes, with the two teachers team-teaching.

The teachers have changed how they teach and talk about teaching and how they relate to each other and think schools should be organized. For example, Lynda (referred to at the outset of this chapter), a special education teacher team-teaching with Nancy, a social studies teacher, remarks on how team-teaching has affected her: "It is wonderful to have the privilege of working with another teacher. It is easier to try new things in class when there is another person to help." Nancy elaborates further on the relationship:

> Lynda's expertise as a teacher allows her to evaluate and direct individuals toward learning that allows them the greatest levels of success. Her sensitivity to the typical learning challenges that students face is second nature to her. From her I am learning to detect and understand how students with special needs function and to accommodate them. Our daily dialogue about what has taken place also allows us the opportunity to draw conclusions about what is and isn't working. Often in conversations we find that our perspective on any given class period is shared. Other times Lynda has observed something that I have missed or vice versa: something clicks with her, not me. Being able to share both our successes and failures is highly motivating. The saying that "two minds are better than one" is one that I truly believe as a result of our experience.

As team teachers, Lynda and Nancy are continually changing their teaching practices. For example, early in their teaming they tried a new approach to teaching anthropology. As anyone who teaches adolescents can attest, adolescents have expertise in interpreting dress, music, and language as cultural signifiers. Therefore, rather than having the students fill out worksheets answering questions regarding anthropology, they decided to have the students become interpreters of cultural artifacts. The students made collages portraying activities and objects important to them and then wrote about and gave oral presentations regarding their collages.

Furthermore, the teachers in the project continually reflect on how they think and talk about education, specifically examining the assumptions within their language regarding multicultural education, student differences, and the structure of schooling. For example, Nancy, the social studies teacher, has read widely and presented workshops to teachers on multicultural education and rethinking how we teach students about the encounters between Christopher Columbus and the indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere. Her interests in rethinking the purposes of schooling and social studies are reflected in readings that go beyond the typical teacher fare. She and I have been exchanging readings, with her lending me di Leonardo's "White Lies, Black Myths" from the *Village Voice* (1992) and my lending her William Stanley's *Curriculum for Utopia* (1992), a text that describes the connections between the early and current progressive movements and postmodernism.

Most importantly, these teachers do not emphasize practices separate from school structures and educational discourses. Although the changes these teachers have made have led to increased student learning, they also realize that the school structure and practices continue to subvert their goals. They have succeeded in obtaining a few structural reforms: most have been given the same planning period so that they can meet collectively, and they have combined their special and general education classes, albeit increasing their classes to forty-five students. Yet they continue to fight for longer academic periods and a real school-within-a-school in which they all teach the same students. Throughout the process, the teachers have demonstrated that engaging in reflective practice requires

changes beyond the classroom level. They realize that changing the culture of the school requires that they not work individually but engage in a collaborative reflective, ethical, and political process aimed at understanding and transforming educational discourses, structures, and practices.

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Chapter Ten

Creating Partnerships and Building a Reflective Community: The Role of Personal Theorizing and Action Research

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We four authors of this chapter are engaged in collaborative efforts designed to enhance systematically our understanding of teaching and learning in social studies contexts and in middle school, high school, district, and university-based practice. Through our interactions across sites, we have gained increased insight into our personal theorizing, the importance of developing a community to share that theorizing and to challenge it, and the power of systematic reflection through action research. Through this on-going professional collaboration, we hope to improve our abilities to facilitate the education of thoughtful and responsible citizens.

Requisites for Reflective Partnerships: Personal Theorizing and Action Research

Four years ago, James Elliott (a district level supervisor of social studies) invited Jeffrey Cornett (a new professor at the University of Central Florida) to meet with him to discuss plans for developing an active district-university relationship. At this meeting, they discussed their respective social studies education philosophies. The two could work together to build partnerships across sites wherever possible. Their shared assumptions include: 1) teaching is active, complex, and practical; 2) teacher decision-making about curriculum is a practical and deliberative activity; 3) teacher decision-making is influenced by personal and practical theories; 4) teachers are and should be reflective; 5) teachers are morally committed, responsible individuals who want the best possible curriculum for each student; 6) teacher reflectivity can be enhanced by partnerships that encourage systematic reflection; 7) action research can serve as the basis for ongoing reflection and provide data for teacher curricular and instructional decisions; 8) university and school-based personnel must work together to generate reflective communities; and 9) university and district level personnel should work to maximize thoughtful teacher leadership of the curriculum.

Since that initial meeting, Elliott and Cornett have had frequent communications on developing strong, thoughtful teacher leadership in their

respective programs. For example, Elliott periodically meets with Cornett's graduate and undergraduate classes, has provided ongoing feedback that has significantly influenced the curriculum for these classes, has served as a member of the social studies teacher education advisory committee and as an advisor for the School Improvement Institute at the University, and has contributed to Cornett's scholarship through joint presentations at both state and national conferences on elements of the partnership. In turn, Cornett has worked with social studies teachers in Seminole County through Elliott's professional development innovations that have included a leadership academy and summer institutes. In each of these efforts, the partners make certain that teacher participants have the opportunity to clarify their personal theorizing, are given the opportunity to develop action research skills, and are challenged by alternative conceptions of social studies teaching and learning. The shared goal is to improve decision-making in our respective contexts so that our public school and university students have the opportunity to develop reflective perspectives and participate as thoughtful, responsible citizens in their professional communities.

We generate all efforts around the notion that teachers significantly determine through their deliberation what students have the opportunity to learn (McCutcheon 1989) and that teachers who systematically study their own theorizing are better students of the teaching/learning process. They then can collaborate with their own students and with each other in more thoughtful school communities. Our collective conversations across school, district-level, and university settings enhance our respective perspectives about the complexity of teaching and learning social studies. This emphasis on reflection and systematic inquiries is supported by the assumption that teacher professional growth and leadership of the curriculum (including district and university-level teachers) are dramatically enhanced when the foundation of teaching practice involves systematic study of the teacher's personal theorizing. This study then provides a thoughtful mental scaffolding for advanced investigation of the literature of social studies (the formal theory) and for generation of local program action. This understanding of the personal and the formal provides the basis for systematic deliberation about the social studies curriculum. Teachers who understand the range of subject matter conceptions, pedagogical theories, student learning characteristics, and their professional mediating role in the curriculum (Parker, 1987) are prepared to facilitate student learning to higher and higher levels. Excerpts from the personal theorizing of Chant and Stern are provided here as illustrations of thoughtful reflection and of the importance of discussing that reflection to challenge assumptions and strengthen decision-making.

Undertaking Action Research: Looking at Personal Theorizing

Richard Chant is a doctoral student at the University of Central Florida and a middle school teacher in Seminole County where Elliott serves as the supervisor. When Chant received his master of arts degree in social studies education, Cornett served as his advisor and professor of social studies and curriculum. Chant next entered the doctoral program, and Cornett continues as his advisor.

In Cornett's curriculum inquiry class, students are given two basic action research projects. The first is an analysis of students' personal theorizing and how it affects planning (preactive), implementation (interactive), and reflective (postactive) stages of instruction. The second project is designed to systematically answer a particular curricular question and is conducted with facilitation by an in-class group and by individuals at the teaching site. Questions investigated might include the following: a) How can I use technology more productively in my classroom? b) What are the issues and problems when I attempt to use inquiry-oriented strategies when our school emphasizes competency testing that requires low-level recall by students? c) Is there a gender bias in the examples I use and the students I select to partici-

pate during instruction? Although we cannot answer any of these questions easily, the goal is to improve practice through addressing a particular question of interest through systematic inquiry and peer collaboration.

As a result of a qualitative study of a secondary government teacher's curricular and instructional decision-making (Cornett 1990a), we developed an action research assignment for students that was designed to help teachers uncover those personal practical theories (Cornett 1990b) that affect professional practice. Personal practical theories are those systematic beliefs that guide teacher action during the planning, interactive, and reflective stages of instruction and that stem from personal experiences (outside of the teacher role) and practical experiences (those inside the classroom as teacher).

The first step in the project is to establish the personal theorizing baseline. Through reflecting upon what is important to them as professionals in their curriculum, teachers: a) list their personal theories, b) define them, c) identify external influences upon them, and d) draw a diagram or picture that represents how these theories interact in practice. This first step initiates considerable reflection by the teacher about what is important for students to know and the role of the teacher and student in the learning environment. In most instances, teachers respond that they had never thought about their practice in this manner and that they had not expressed their personal practice theories (PPTs) until this assignment. Typical PPTs expressed by social studies teachers have included: teacher as expert; teacher as resource; students as responsible; subject matter that prepares for citizenship (both now and in the future); and the importance of fundamental skills.

In planning and implementing social studies curricula, understanding the effects of this theorizing is fundamental. For example, if the teacher considers self as expert, professional decisionmaking will include opportunities to display that expertise. Teachers often manifest this personal theory by emphasizing lectures and textbook-driven instruction (Thornton 1991). This conception also, if carried to extreme, will no doubt lead students to believe that social studies knowledge is that which the teacher deems important. However, if the teacher views himself or herself as a resource, then facilitating student learning through a variety of approaches (such as lecture, simulation, role playing, inquiry-oriented lessons, utilization of interactive technologies, etc.) will dominate professional decisions including encouraging student-to-student and student-to-teacher curricular initiations.

The Theorizing of a Middle School Teacher: Chant

While completing this assignment, Chant identified seven personal theories about the role and responsibilities of a teacher that had influenced his teaching: 1) teacher as contingent facilitator; 2) develop personal values and principles; 3) develop critical thinking; 4) provide a varied and flexible curriculum; 5) teacher as an enthusiastic and interested individual; 6) allow learning to be a positive experience; and 7) provide encouragement for student growth.

After defining each in detail, Chant described the restraints on his teaching: time constraints and the organization of the curriculum. Time constraints (mostly the lack of enough time) interfere with opportunities in the curriculum for critical thinking, development of personal values, and student involvement in the social process. According to Chant, the development of lessons around these types of PPTs requires much time and energy and makes it difficult to use teacher editions of textbooks and obtain resource materials from his school. Although Chant believes in a varied and flexible curriculum, putting this belief into practice takes considerable time and requires communication with successful teachers and the search for new materials and sources, even while thinking about the current program.

The curricular organization appears to Chant to be based on retention of information, requiring students to learn large blocks of material suggested in the county and state curriculum guide-

lines. To Chant, these guidelines appear to require simple transmission of information through teachers and, as a result, cause students to think on a low level and neglect inquiry or reflective types of thinking.

Chant then depicts his PPTs in a graphic that shows contingency theory (PPT1) in the hub of a wheel, with the spokes of the wheel his other theories, and the rim of the wheel the students. By definition, the teacher's role is to facilitate learning by making curricular and instructional choices contingent upon student needs. In part two of assignment one, Chant analyses three lessons to determine how these PPTs affect planning, instruction, and reflection phases of instruction. Cornett suggests that teachers construct a series of data boxes that illustrate each instructional phase for at least three lessons. In the data box in the planning stage for lesson one, Chant constructs a plan with student and teacher actions and deliberations about the plan (with an analysis of PPTs influencing the plan) following that plan. For example, he states in the plan that "students are to brainstorm on significant reasons to the questions asked. Students are to record the best possible answers." The teacher will "show a sample of a crest. Ask students why they think this would be an important symbol both in battle and for the family." In the deliberation section, he states that "students must consider and evaluate what is important to them and their families, and include these items on a family crest (PPTs 3, 2, 6, 7) and think about why symbols, non-written communication and diagrams were important during the Middle Ages (PPT 3)."

Chant then summarizes his conclusions about this lesson from his analysis of the planning, interactive, and reflective stages of the lesson:

> The first lesson I described was titled "Student Crests." This lesson was developed to help students examine historical traits that affected the lives of Middle Age society. In addition, students were to reflect and think about the elements that affect their own lives and apply this knowledge to a student-generated model.
>
> I created this lesson with the plan to involve the students in critical thinking. To do this, I arranged my introduction to consist of student brainstorming. Since I have exhibited a large amount of **control** over classroom discussion, I was not worried about student involvement. One of the key elements during the planning phase was to have students consider and identify ideas and values that are important to their families and themselves. When this was completed, I wanted the students to apply their knowledge to a drawing of a crest that was similar to European crests during the Middle Ages. Because the students are drawing their findings, they get to reinforce their historical learning by applying it to modern beliefs. In addition, they are doing an activity in which many students like to participate . . . drawing.
>
> By planning my lesson in such a manner, I believe my PPTs are evident. For example, students are critically thinking about their values and opinions. Furthermore, my second PPT is directed to help students develop values and principles. Other PPTs that present themselves include #s 1, 4, 6, and 7.
>
> During the lesson, I needed to rely on contingency as my students were extremely concerned about their social studies fair projects. I decided to include a short discussion/answer session for my students. This distraction was an external influence that is part of the explicit curriculum, but was not planned and would affect the timing of the remainder of the class. However, the students adapted well and we quickly recovered the extra time.
>
> The remainder of the class went closely as planned (see interactive phase of lesson). I did need to adjust somewhat for time constraints. In addition, I needed to teach about the components of the crests they were developing. This was an element of the lesson

> I overlooked during planning. Again, I had to make adjustments during class and continue with my teaching. My students made the adjustments well (I think they are getting used to my in-class changes) and we continued as planned. The reflective phase of the lesson shows that my PPTs were evident in the lesson. Also, I realized that I can alter the lesson to make it more effective and I can make arrangements with the science teacher to help both of us communicate better with our project students. I was fortunate that external influences were kept to a minimum. I also realize that my planning was not perfect. Yet, it was sound enough to allow changes and still keep the momentum of the learning.

Cornett reacts to these statements when the project is submitted in with a series of questions that are designed to help the teacher probe even more deeply and to reinforce the teacher's significant effort that is required for this type of analysis. For example, he asks Chant if reinforcement of student learning is another theory that he has not identified. He also asks for clarification on Chant's statement about control. He also suggests that Chant identify the types of adjustments that teachers are required to make over an extended period of time. In this case, it was student projects for a district level competition. Cornett also asks if the soundness of planning is what allows the changing, or is it his interactive flexibility, or both? The intent is to encourage Chant not to draw unwarranted conclusions and to assist him in the clarification of his thinking.

Cornett has the privilege of reading a detailed analysis of practice that shows considerable reflection. It would take a substantial amount of field work for Cornett to gain the same insights about this middle school classroom. These insights are important to the teacher educator who is also pressed by temporal concerns, cannot visit nearly as many classrooms as he would like on a regular basis, and also helps him gauge the effectiveness of this type of assignment. In turn, he discusses these insights with the district supervisor who gains increased understanding of the particular teacher and the social studies curriculum as mediated by that teacher.

These three professionals have collaborated further to discuss understandings with a broader community that, in turn, increases the depth of their partnership and opens their action research to scrutiny from the field. Chant completes the last major part of the project as he designs a professional development plan around his findings. In this instance, Chant states the following:

> As I mentioned in the above section, my personal theories are constantly evolving as I grow as a teacher. Not only is it vital to attempt informally to understand my PPTs, but it is necessary for me to investigate systematically my practice to study the changes associated with my PPTs. Because of my personal changes within any given year, I believe that I should analyze my practice and PPTs at least once a year. My personal practice can also be analyzed indirectly through my reading of the educational literature available on action research. After examining my practice, I apparently consider student development of thinking, values, and beliefs a significant part of my teaching. In addition, how my lessons are implemented are important to my teaching. Therefore, it may be beneficial to examine models of teaching such as critical thinking in the social studies, jurisprudential inquiry, social problem solving, and other areas of social science inquiry. Also, I need to examine how the social studies (scope and sequence) and specific classes of the social studies are implemented by various organizations and professionals that may also provide data to improve my effectiveness.

Cornett's role is to take this framework and suggest resources and ongoing feedback to help Chant achieve his goals. For example, he recommends to Chant Walter Parker's chapter on the research related to thinking and decisionmaking

and the chapter by William Joyce, Timothy Little, and Stanley Wronski on scope and sequence, both in the *Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning* (1991).

The Theorizing of a High School Teacher: Stern

Elliott established the Seminole County Leadership Academy in 1990, thus providing the first systematic opportunity for Cornett, Elliott, and Barbara Stern to interact through discussions of personal theorizing and implications for leadership in the profession. Cornett and Stern also collaborated as the university supervisor and school supervisor of several interns. Stern is currently supervising the internship of one of Cornett's social studies preservice teachers and has completed an action research project in which she analyzed her PPTs in her planning and supervision.

Stern's PPTs include: 1) the dignity and worth of each individual; 2) learning is a lifelong process; 3) you cannot get anywhere if you do not know where you are going; 4) education should be interdisciplinary in nature; 5) people rise to the level of your expectations; 6) be open-minded, fair, flexible, and empathetic; and 7) be positive, enthusiastic, enjoy life, and do not try to be perfect. Her detailed discussion of these theories continues over several pages. Stern's analysis of her teaching and supervision is reflected in the following excerpt:

> The transcripts reflect three lessons. The first was with my intern designing the lesson to be implemented the following morning. The other two reflect implementation of the lesson, the first time and the second time, after adjustments for time constraints and student feedback from the first exercise.

Stern continues her reflections following the coding of some data sheets with the following:

> The process of *training* an intern is really very interesting. It gives the supervising teacher opportunities to try out new situations, listen to new ideas, and learn. In this case there were several outside considerations, all of which relate to my PPTs. Paramount in my mind was the fact that my intern was assuming responsibility for my two Advanced World History classes on Monday. I did not want him to go home Friday with 55 AP essays to grade because I felt it would be an unfair burden. He was not aware of how nervous he could be on Monday, although in retrospect, he told me that as the weekend progressed, he did dwell more and more on Monday and was glad he hadn't had all those papers to grade. I believe this preplanning on my part reflects PPTs 1, 2, and 6.

Stern discusses the problematic nature of supervision in the following:

> I also believe that the relationship of a supervising teacher and an intern is very tricky. You are both supervisor and a peer; not unlike the relationship of a doctoral student with his or her professors? In order to *empower* my intern and give him a sense of ownership, especially in AP where it is difficult to turn over total control, allowing him to choose the activity from a range of suggestions gives him input. This is clearly related to PPTs 1, 5, and 6. In fact 6, the empathy part of it, seems to come up over and over in all these transcripts.
>
> Another major part of my hidden agenda with interns is on risk taking and decision-making. I believe that fits with 6 and 7. The transcript clearly indicates my lack of concern with the exercise's failure if the learning is still in place. This is an integration of all seven of my PPTs. The transcript clearly reflects that I treat my intern in a similar fashion to my students in a learning situation.

Stern analyzed the transcripts and lesson plans and concluded the following:

> The first consideration in examining the tabulated results [indicating the frequency and patterns of PPTs] is that . . . I was generally pleased with the results as I found that I am doing both what I believe I should be doing and what I think I am doing [triangulated by student and intern feedback;

analysis of transcripts]. It appears that I am obsessive about politeness to students, process, and empathy. I further note that one of my strong skills, organization and goal setting (PPT3), is clearly there. This particular lesson didn't lend itself to an emphasis on PPT5. In addition, the transcript revealed a mechanism, the threat of grades, to keep students on task. This is either a violation of personal theorizing, as the threat keeps them going, or more optimistically, the belief that they will rise to the challenge of making a good grade!

Stern continues the interpretation with the following:

> The tallies could indicate that my PPTs need to be reordered in emphasis, but I'm not prepared to do that on such a narrow sample of lessons. I do believe that I shall reflect on this further and will "reorder them" if I repeatedly emphasize some less than others.

Stern concludes:

> The best part of my action research was the *congruence* I felt in my practice and beliefs. I clearly wish to continue in that vein and will continue to emphasize this in my planning. . . . *I like the fact that there was congruence between the way I see my interns and my students.* I think it implies the respect I have for my students, as I believe I treat my interns fairly well and they tend to stay in touch with me and maintain friendly relationships after they leave my supervision.

Cornett's role is to support those aspects of the analysis that appear warranted, provide challenges to assumptions, and suggest resources and questions for further thought. Cornett, for example, responds to Stern's reference to the process of teacher training with the suggestion that she delve into the teacher education literature that criticizes the notion of training. He points to the possible tension between elements of traditional training and promotion of reflective thought. Cornett also questions Stern's notion of empowerment and refers her to various critical theorists as possible sources to enrich Stern's formal theory base. Finally, he stresses that congruence among theories and practice is not the overall objective of the assignment, but rather analysis of congruence and the implications of practice based on that configuration of PPTs.

Stern's detailed analysis of her personal theorizing and its effect on her teaching and supervision provide Cornett with a significant data base from which to: 1) facilitate the enhancement of her research skills (she will be entering the doctoral program in the fall semester); 2) suggest sources of support for her PPTs and practice; and 3) suggest sources of challenge for her PPTs and practice. Just as importantly, the analysis provides Cornett and Elliott with a rich portrait of an experienced teacher's decision-making that helps to reinforce their own work as professor and supervisor.

Conclusion

Although we view our individual and collaborative efforts as positive contributions to the broad educational goal of facilitating the education of thoughtful, participatory citizens, we also share frustrations because of barriers to the generation of reflective communities. Major barriers include: 1) the structure of bureaucratic organizations that often impede collaboration and innovation through standardization of both student and professional evaluation and school routines and master schedules (see Skritic and Ware 1992); and 2) the lack of structured time outside of institutes and graduate courses for systematic individual and community reflection about social studies teaching and learning.

Action research projects that attempt to determine the influences of personal practical theories upon curricular and instructional decisionmaking can provide significant insights for teachers, supervisors, and teacher educators. Because the teaching/learning context is so complex and fluid at each of our sites, such study is necessary on a frequent basis. We do not suggest that this particular process is the best one for everyone,

although we do contend that systematic reflection is the only method to make sense out of this complexity. When we have data that illustrate this problematic and sometimes difficult environment, we believe they enable us to appreciate our role as educators even more and, as such, serve to provide a sense of professionalism that is rarely present when an outsider comes in and uses a standardized instrument to determine our effectiveness or when we are presented with teacher-proof materials to implement. Examining our practice through our eyes, describing that practice with our words, and discussing those thoughts with other professionals who serve as sounding boards are empowering. The process permits us to begin to join with others in a reflective community, one that advances the cause of action research and treats teacher decisionmaking about curriculum and instruction as both problematic and highly complex, a process that requires the input and support of all who have a stake in the outcome.

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